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Fr. MAJOR AND MRS COURT TREATT

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CAPE TO CAIRO

THE RECORD OF A HISTORIC MOTOR JOURNEY

BY

STELLA COURT TREATT

F.R.G.S.

WITH A FOREWORD BY

THE EARL OF CLARENDON

ILLUSTRATED WITH SIXTY-FOUR PHOTOGRAVURES
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY

T. A. GLOVER F.R.G.S. F.R.P.S.

AND A MAP

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TO

MY COMRADES OF THE LONG TREK

FOREWORD

OF the many thousands who will read this book, the vast majority are no doubt condemned by circumstances to the ordered routine of civilized life. That life has its joys and rigours, but they are not the joys or the rigours of the adventurous life whose appeal is universal, and greatest perhaps to those to whom the opportunity of such experience has been denied.

It is a matter of taste whether you would prefer to have your car held up by a policeman or a rhinoceros, whether it is pleasanter to be delayed by the stream of traffic in Piccadilly or by the Zambesi in flood. At any rate, the readers of this book will appreciate why there is at present no traffic congestion on the Cape to Cairo route and no gyratory system in the Great Rift Valley.

Mrs Court Treatt's narrative will appeal to those who have tasted the joys of pioneering and to those who have been denied them. It tells of human endeavour under Nature's frowns and smiles in remote places where so many of our race are working for the Empire in Africa; it is quickened with a lively power of observation, and will command interest and admiration as a tale well told of a great journey carried through in the true spirit of adventure.

CLARENDON

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CAPE TO CAIRO

CHAPTER I

THE BIRTH OF THE IDEA

THIRTY years ago a little dark-haired boy said to his brother: "When I'm a man I'm going to cross Africa with a handful of dates." That was the birth of an idea which later resulted in the journey I am about to describe.

When we were married, three years ago, my husband said: "One day quite soon I'm going to take you to all the beloved spots I know in Africa—in fact, I'm going to take you from Cape Town to Cairo in a car." I laughed, and thought how perfectly splendid it would be, but I hardly believed that it could be more than a dream. The next stage came a year later, when I thought, as I lay in a nursing home in South Africa, that I was not long for this cheery old world. It seems, I suppose, rather a queer time for any stage in anything requiring effort to commence. But it was the threshold of our plans for this long-dreamed-of journey. One day, after an operation, I lay on my back thinking how perfectly beastly all nursing homes were, how hard-hearted the sweetest of nursing sisters could be, how I was loathing the white walls of my little ward, and the pain, when my husband came beaming into the room, with: "Let's go just as soon as you're well—do say you want to go!"

"But where on earth to?—Oh, Lord, how it hurts!"

"Poor little one, I know. Well, when you are strong

enough, I've got a thrilling plan to discuss with you, but I think I'd better bottle it up for the present."

"No, tell me now, I'm sure I'm better already!"

"Well, then, it's—Cape to Cairo!"

After that exciting afternoon I began to get well. The idea of a big African journey was too irresistible—I defy anyone to remain ill, if there *is* any chance of recovery, with such a hope dangled before the imagination.

During my convalescence at home we talked and planned; then my husband got really busy, getting into touch with the necessary people in South Africa and in England, people who might help considerably on the journey through Africa. General J. C. Smuts, then Prime Minister of South Africa, was very encouraging, and thought that we should make the attempt. He promised to do all he could, and immediately wrote to people in England who might be helpful and interested in the project, for he believed that a journey such as the one we proposed would be of Imperial value.

The hard work and all the worry and anxiety of the preliminary organization began. Letters had to be written, letters answered, people had to be seen—my husband began to look distraught. When I asked him if the car was running well he would answer that old So-and-so considered that we had some chance of getting through. He began coming home at unearthly hours, expecting me to be intelligent at four A.M. How we talked! It seemed that the whole world revolved round our scheme; nothing else mattered. When I regarded other people, and saw how they went about their everyday tasks, jaded and rather bored-looking, I felt sorry that they could have no such prospect to enchant them.

The journey by motor-car had been attempted before,

but had never been accomplished. Poor Captain Kelsey, who attempted it in 1913–14, had trouble right from the start. The story of his journey makes very sad telling; everything seemed to go against him, and finally he met with a tragic death in Rhodesia. When hunting in long grass he wounded a leopard, the infuriated beast turned upon him, and he was fatally mauled.

Africa is in my blood. Perhaps this is accounted for by the fact that my family on both sides has for many years been connected with it. They are two old colonial families, and, in the very early days, before and at the time of Dr Livingstone, they did pioneering work in Central Africa. Ivory was a great objective to the early settler then, and, as a little girl, bedtime was made a joy because my mother then told my sister and me thrilling stories of our grandfather's hunting expeditions. We never knew him, but nevertheless he was a very real person in our imaginations, and we thrilled at the thought that our grandfather had done such brave and splendid things with unknown savages and fierce lions and elephants! His sons had accompanied him later on when they were old enough, and they too were wheedled into telling us stories of long ago when they fought in the Kaffir wars, and hunted elephants.

When my sister and I were small girls we were terrible tomboys, I am afraid. We had brothers several sizes larger than ourselves, and we simply had to take a firm stand, or be called frightened babies by them. We would climb anything, from a dangerous cliff to a forbidden apple-tree, and we were always in trouble with our governess for not knowing the first thing about our lessons. As we grew older we became more tame, but always, deep down in my heart at least, there has been a

wild longing to do something different from the ordinary things of civilized life, and that is why this adventure appealed to me right from the start.

We realized at an early date that we should have to come to England to get the expedition properly organized. My sister and her husband, Mr Herbert Cranko, came with us to help, and we reached London in the March of 1924.

We found when we arrived that every one was ready to assist us, and our introductions from General Smuts helped enormously. It was he who introduced my husband to the Colonial Office; and the Right Hon. J. H. Thomas, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, became interested in our proposed journey, and furnished us with letters asking all officials throughout British Africa to do everything possible to help us on our way. This assistance was given unreservedly, and we found that even the lonely officer, thousands of miles out in the blue, knew who we were, and was ready to do everything in his power to cheer us on our road. Among others who helped us was Sir Reginald Wingate, whose knowledge of the Sudan is unrivalled. Through his kind offices my husband was introduced to the late Sir Lee Stack, who ensured for us the friendly reception and co-operation of the officials in the Sudan.

It was encouraging to find, as we did, that officials and private individuals shared our belief that such an expedition was valuable, apart from the mere adventure of it.

After all the official preliminaries came the question: what should we require on the journey? This took a lot of thinking out. Our first need was a car—two cars, in fact—and my husband's choice fell on the Crossley. He had had previous experience of the car during and after the War.

It was used by the Royal Flying Corps, and while attached to the R.A.F. he had had good opportunity of testing it. After the Armistice was signed he had taken charge of the third section for the making of aerodromes for the Trans-African Air Route, and during that time also he had used a Crossley car and found it quite reliable for the rough work required of it. From his experience on the air-route he decided that the only way to solve the food problem was to lay out dumps throughout Africa. Dumps of spare parts, petrol, and oil would also be required for the cars. This was a big undertaking, and involved much work and forethought in selecting and procuring our supplies and sending them out to Africa. We were helped by the Department of Overseas Trade, which put us in touch with British manufacturers and traders, who lessened our task enormously by advising us in the choice of kit and as to the best method of shipping supplies to Africa.

Our route was only a projected one, and we could not possibly know for certain exactly where our roads would take us. It was rather remarkable, however, that in only a very few cases had we actually to go off our line of march to pick up our dumps.

The placing of dumps in certain parts of Central Africa and the Sudan involved little expeditions of their own. Our route was to be through all-British territory, and we realized from the start that we should have to go through forests and swamps and other places where there are no roads. In spite of these difficulties we determined to stick to the 'all-British' plan, and not go through foreign territory. In the vicinity of the Bahr el Arab natives had to carry supplies for the dumps on their heads for hundreds of miles, and petrol and spare parts are not easy things to carry. In the Sudan camels bore supplies out into the

desert for our later use, and in the early days of the expedition it always fascinated me to think of these necessaries being placed throughout Africa to await us in almost unknown places. I saw visions of natives bearing their burdens away into the forests, through swamps and over mountains. I saw a string of camels, nose to tail, fading away over the horizon carrying supplies which might mean the difference between success and failure to us. It all seemed very lonely to me, and it helped me to realize the adventure and romance of what we were attempting.

It was all-important that the kit to be taken with us should be selected with the utmost care. Our cameras had to be the very best obtainable, for we intended to take a film of our travels and adventures, and we were resolved that it should be a good one, and that it should lose nothing by careless selection of cameras and lenses. Again, the packing of these fragile articles for such a rough journey needed the most careful thought. Tools, chop-boxes, cooking-pots, tarpaulins, medical kit, bed rolls, were among the thousand and one things we had to remember to buy and keep within a certain weight. Our cars could carry just a ton and no more, and there was a limited space in the bodies for packing, so it can readily be understood how difficult it was to get our kit just right.

Have you ever thought what it would mean if you had to get everything you needed for a year's journey—knowing that generally there would be no chemist, no doctor, that there would be no means of getting anything needful for months at a time? Our cooking-pots were a problem. What kind would best stand the rough handling of the natives? Our plates and cups were of

specially strong enamel-ware, our knives and forks of stainless steel. I wanted to take tumblers, but my husband stoutly refused to look at them! All our kit was strong and was meant to stand the hardest wear—which it got! I was allowed a camp bed as a special concession to the fact of my being a woman, but I might add that this bed was very soon hurled away, with many other things which at the beginning of our journey we thought indispensable.

There were six people to provide for, and the question of weight was all-important and a very worrying problem. We had to cut everything down to the minimum.

Next came the consideration of clothes. We should need clothes suitable for the tropics, and clothes for the bitterly cold mornings and evenings of South Africa. I thought that I should require a lot of clothes, but I found later that I actually needed very few. I bought riding breeches, top boots, bush skirts, and many other things which proved to be useless in the bush. I am such a minute person that I simply could not get even boys' clothes to fit me. If they were long enough in the arms they were too big across the shoulders; so everything had to be made for me, and it was good fun on the first day of the journey arraying myself in my boy's outfit; but I remember how shy I felt at appearing before the others, knowing quite well how I should be teased. To add to my discomfort, the clothes seemed impossibly stiff, and I felt that everything was bulging in the wrong place. I found later that shirts and shorts were the most practical kit for the kind of thing we were doing, and I used them throughout the whole trip. We all had warm overcoats, and, when necessary, wrapped blankets round our chilly knees. I remember that I wore my sister to a

shadow before we left England trying to get a helmet to suit me (for I was still in the stage of considering such trifles), but we did not succeed. My *terai* was a faithful friend to me throughout the journey, but the helmet I contrived to lose on the earliest possible occasion. The last I saw of it was one rainy day in South Africa, when it reposed grotesquely on the head of a small Basuto piccanin.

My raincoat was also a bad investment. It was really a trench-coat, suggested by my husband as the very thing for the journey. It was too bulgy and heavy for me, so at some place in the *karroo* I 'forgot' it. The next day a man stopped me on the road and handed it to me, done up in a neat brown-paper parcel. I never could lose that coat—it dogged my footsteps through Africa, and I ended up by taking the fleece lining out and wearing that. Even then it still haunted me, for I noticed a year later that the rainproof part of it was being used by some one as a cover for his typewriter!

In a word, I bought far too many gadgets, and I think Africa from the Cape to Cairo is strewn with oddments from my personal kit.

Our shirts were made of material specially designed for the tropics. We found it very suitable, and it stood exceedingly hard wear and tear, especially the latter. Our shorts were made of khaki drill; we had woollen sports stockings and veldtschoen. Veldtschoen are South African shoes, usually worn by the back-veldt Boer. They are made of soft cowhide, and they have no heels. We chose these for several reasons, the chief being their extreme comfort and durability. They are invaluable in the bush for shooting, as they make no noise.

We all had jack-knives and pocket-knives, and I might

say that I considered myself lucky if a day went by without some one swearing by everything he held holy that my knives were his property. It certainly was a mistake to buy knives all alike!

Our rifles were of the first importance. We chose Rigby's. Mine was a ·275, and could shoot as true as any rifle that has ever been made, although I do not wish to imply that I always lived up to my rifle, for I made some unforgivably bad shots at times. My husband had two ·350's and one ·475. We had two shotguns, and the others of the party each possessed his own particular rifle. My husband took maps, of course, many of which he had made himself on the African air-route, and some exceedingly valuable ones lent by the Topographical Department of the War Office.

We had a simple surgical kit and medicine chest, with bandages and local anæsthetics. I did not know very much about doctoring, but enough to attend to any of us who needed straightforward nursing. My husband knew how to set a simple fracture, and the rest we had to leave to chance.

During the eight months it took us to organize the expedition we lived in London, and spent the week-ends in Surrey, at my husband's old home. These respites from the worry of work were very welcome. It was heavenly to go down there and play about on the river in a canoe, and we used to go for long excursions into the woods and take our lunch with us. I was not very strong at that time, and the strain was telling on me more than I realized, and I think that my people were not sure whether I ought to attempt the hard journey. I felt doubtful too at times of my ability to stand it, and I had nasty moments when I thought that I might

be left behind somewhere in the forests of Africa—but I was so determined to have a good try at getting through, and becoming as strong as any of the men, that I soon lost all futile 'lonely grave' thoughts.

My mother was a most helpful person, and always believed that I could do the journey. She had faith in us, and even, later on, when things looked their worst she never lost hope and confidence that we should finally succeed. I think she felt this confidence partly because she knew a great deal of Africa and its conditions, so that the idea of African exploration was not so strange to her as to most of our friends, and partly, too, because she had great faith in my husband's capabilities.

The last two weeks in England was a period of perpetual motion for us. We got no sleep and very little rest. There were clothes to be tried on, final arrangements to be made, luncheons and dinners to be attended, interviews with newspaper reporters to be got through, friends to say good-bye to, and the thousand things that always crowd upon one on the eve of departure. My room at the hotel was a seething and howling wilderness of half-packed trunks. All these had to be completely packed before night, and sent down to Southampton the next morning. My husband could not help me, as he was attending to the shipping of the kit, and making sure that nothing was forgotten.

The next day was a whirl, and I can hardly remember what happened, except that I know we got to Southampton somehow, and some lovely bouquets were presented to me. Peggy, my small niece, handed me a gigantic Felix, far bigger than herself, and a gramophone record of *What'll I do ?*—"so as you'll 'member me in the bush!" It was staggering actually to find ourselves

on the boat, and really about to embark on our great enterprise. Cameras clicked and turned, people wished us good luck, and flowers and telegrams were thrust into our cabins. It was somewhat depressing when it came to our turn to say good-bye to our own particular friends, for none of us knew whether we should ever meet again, although we would not admit it even to ourselves, and our feelings were very mixed—frankly, for a moment or two, I felt like weeping, but the lure of the big adventure awaiting us in Africa supported me.

CHAPTER II

INTRODUCING C.T.

ALL his friends call him 'C.T.' He is a large man, over six feet in height, and his character is in keeping with his size. But with all his strength, he is gentle and kind. He never loses his head in any circumstances, always remaining perfectly calm and collected in a difficult situation. His real name is Chaplin Court Treatt, and he comes of Cornish ancestors of the adventurous kind—true buccaneers—who sailed the high seas, and visited strange lands, in the Cornish way! He has inherited all their love of adventure and travel, and will never, I am convinced, settle down to a city life.

As a small boy he was rather dreamy, disliking children's parties, and usually stealing off, while other children were playing games, with a bottle of lemonade and a hunk of cake to climb the highest tree and scheme out what he would do when he was a man.

His first ambition, naturally, was to become a fireman with a beautiful shiny helmet; then he dreamed of being a sailor, climbing barefoot up the mast and shouting: "Pirates on the port bow!"

After he went to Westminster School his inclinations gradually underwent a change, and he decided, seriously, to become an artist. He worked hard for years, and showed great promise of becoming a good one. Though his parents had other plans for his future, he remained true to his choice, and went uncomplainingly through the

usual struggle for existence and recognition which every artist must experience. Then the War came, and he went to France, in the infantry, with the first Expeditionary Force. In 1915 he joined the Flying Corps, and he flew as observer until 1916, when his machine was shot down, the pilot killed, and he was badly smashed. After a time of recuperation in England he was sent to Egypt, where he served on the Staff until the Armistice. He was then posted to South Africa for two and a half years, to command the third section engaged on the building of aerodromes for the Trans-African Air Route, in preparation for the first flight by Sir Pierre Van Ryneveldt. This third section covered the country from Abercorn to Cape Town, a distance of about 2000 miles. After this work was done he lived in Africa, always thinking of a big journey in the great dark continent. It was the dream of his life to travel through Africa—he loved the country, the natives, and their strange customs. He had gained much experience, and he had the knack of understanding the native mentality and temperament to a very marked degree. He had become known to many chiefs, and he used to tell me stories of Khama, the great old chief of the Bamangwato of Bechuanaland, whom he met while he was building aerodromes in Khama's country. C.T. loved the old man, and had interesting talks with him about the early days of his reign. Khama's people then feared the Matabele, a powerful tribe and supposed to be invincible. They became demoralized with fear when this tribe raided them, and they needed a strong man to hold them together, and to instil courage into their souls. Khama at this time became king, and proved to be the man they needed. When the Matabele came he gathered together his forlorn band of young warriors,

made them fight for their lives, and ended by soundly whacking the Matabele. This put new courage into his people, and Khama had complete control over them to the day of his death, about three or four years ago. He confided to C.T. that he put his first victory down to the fact that he rode a horse, thereby putting the fear of the devil into the Matabele, who had never before seen this animal. The last time C.T. saw the old man Khama gave him a beautiful civet-cat *kaross* as a parting gift. Khama told C.T. that he feared he would never see him again, so he would like him to accept these beautiful skins to cover himself during the cold night, and the warmth derived from them would be as nothing compared with the warmth of his heart for him.

It is remarkable that most Englishmen gain the liking of the natives without at the same time losing any of their respect. To get on well with the African natives you must treat them with tact, firmness, and justice.

C.T. told me stories about places and people with thrilling names, such as 'Chiwefwe,' 'Chambesi,' 'Lia lui,' and 'Mashukolumbwe.' I had heard these words from my father when I was a small girl, and it was pleasant to find, when I was grown up, another man just as filled as he had been with the romance of Africa, who loved it as he had done, and who wanted to take me to see all the strange people whose very names made music in my heart, and whose mind and soul were so attuned to the simple and natural things of life.

How we talked! His mind was always a source of wonder to me, and he brought it more and more home to me that the simple things are the big things, and that the surest way to find happiness is to eliminate as far as possible all the petty things of life and refrain from

C. T. MENDING HIS VELDTSCHOEN

bothering too much about non-essentials, and, above all, to remain perfectly calm. This is not always easy, I am afraid, but I found his outlook on life a tremendous help to me on the expedition, for when things went wrong it was most comforting to have somebody so reliable to lean upon.

It was very fortunate for us that he is a good mechanic, for on a motor expedition it is essential that the leader should know how to discover and put right anything that has gone wrong, and if necessary be able to make a spare part for the car with the minimum of tools and material. He knew how to build rafts and bridges, and was the best omelette-maker in the camp! We used to badger the life out of him to cook us omelettes, and he could make our mouths water when he spoke of how well he could cook ham and eggs—if only we had some ham! His pigeon-pie became the camp joke for a long time, for one day, when we were short of food, he came gaily into camp with six plump pigeons and made us wild with delight by promising to make a pigeon-pie. He would take no fussy advice from anyone and insisted upon doing the whole thing unaided by mere amateurs. The pigeons were plucked, and we saw C.T. sitting on a petrol tin as happy as a king, making pastry for the pie. He arranged the uncooked birds neatly in a circle round the pie-dish, with their little pink feet out. He then cut slots in the dough for the feet to go through, placed it over the dish and proceeded to bake his pie. We all had strong teeth, but that pie beat us! Even the cook, after valiant efforts, had to give it up, and we had to make our meal of rice and sour milk instead.

I am sure that every one on the expedition liked C.T. He always had a plan for overcoming a difficulty, whether

it was getting the cars dragged through rivers and swamps, or up the steepest hills, or whatever else it might be. His tact with the natives was remarkable, and he invariably got them to do what he wanted done, even if they were a bit difficult to manage in certain areas. His old native servant, Julius, was devoted to him, and a better servant it would be hard to find in the whole world. Julius went with us from Cape Town to Cairo, and did anything, from digging the cars out of mud to acting as ambassador and interpreter, throughout the journey.

It was a never-ending source of amazement to me how C.T. led us through the difficulties and unexpected obstacles of Africa with such calmness and clear-sightedness. We struggled through torrential rains in Rhodesia, through bridgeless rivers and swamps, through roadless forests and desert; and he never failed us.

Such was the leader of our expedition through Africa.

CHAPTER III

INTRODUCING SOME OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION

IT was all over; we had seen the last farewells waved from the shore and watched England disappear. We could now settle down to get to know each other.

Here we were, four of us, going out to Africa, each with his own thoughts as to what awaited us there. I can see us that first morning, the 26th of August, 1924, sitting on a secluded portion of the sunny deck. First there was C.T., looking as if he had thrown off a lot of worry, as he laughed at a joke made by Mr T. A. Glover, the cinematographer to the expedition. Then there was Mr Law, enjoying intensely the contemplation of a beautiful pair of socks which he vigorously insisted would stun the gentle African savage, and be worth a flock of chickens at the very least.

Mr Glover had just returned from an African expedition and knew what to expect out there. He had been with Captain Angus Buchanan, M.C., through the Sahara Desert from Lagos to Algiers—a hard journey which entailed much endurance. It was the cinema record of this journey, which we had seen and admired in London, that led us to get into touch with him. He too was bitten by the 'lure of Africa,' and was most willing to go out with us, so we felt from the very start that here was a man who would work with us, and never let us down, who would not mind shortage of food and all the attendant misfortunes of an expedition, and we were very

happy to number him as one of our party. His aid in selecting the photographic equipment was invaluable; we knew that we had one of the best men at his job, and that our cameras would be the best an expert could provide.

Mr Fred Law,[1] special correspondent to *The Daily Express*, was a dear person who took life as a huge joke. He had had journalistic experience both in America and in England, and had just returned from a world's tour; he too had *Wanderlust*—I think that was why he was going out with us to write the happenings of the expedition for his paper. We liked him very much; he was such a jolly companion.

As for me, I saw myself as two separate beings—the one, modern, gay, and laughter-loving, liking the things that civilization gives, enjoying dancing, pretty frocks, and care-free companions; the other, serious and eager to do something worth while, longing to get down to the simple and big things of life, even to suffer, and play a losing game through to the end if necessary; and I felt that, no matter what I had previously done in life, this journey was going to fulfil the half-formed dreams of what I knew real living must mean.

We told each other about our past adventures and experiences, but we invariably returned to the one thought uppermost in our minds—the future, Africa, and what it held for us. Where would it all lead? What would be the finish? Would one of us be left behind and have no adventures to tell? Each would look at the others and wonder. But we soon shook off these speculations, for sad thoughts do not last long when skies are blue, and somebody would tell what he thought to be the latest joke,

[1] We all got nicknames on the journey. Casual references to "G." which may be found in later pages mean Mr Glover, and those to "Fred" Mr Law. I apologize to them and my readers for these informalities.

and when no laughter greeted him he would ask: "Have you heard that one before?" And the reply would be: "Not lately!" And so we gradually got to know each other, with a story, deck quoits, and cocktails. As to the cocktails, the men felt that they were leaving the flesh-pots behind, and resolved to lay in a store of reminiscences, and so would vie with one another as to who could mix the best one—making me the judge of their quality. And the names of them! We had Doctors, Martinis, Swizzles, Whiz-bangs, Corpse-revivers, Camels, and one which I called Chloroform! But the worst was to come in South Africa from my brother, Errol Hinds, our fifth member, when he introduced what he called a "Mustang" —it was, it kicked!

Errol is my youngest brother. He was keen to join us on the expedition, and had arranged to meet us in Africa. He had been studying too hard, and it was necessary for him to have a complete break. He was an extraordinarily good shot, had done some hunting in Bechuanaland, and had an aptitude for things mechanical. He was quite a lad, but because of his general dependability we considered him a valuable acquisition to the expedition.

On the voyage out we were asked innumerable questions, of course. Some people thought that we were quite insane to attempt to take cars through Africa, others seemed to think that it would be as easy as driving from London to Brighton. It was interesting to hear the many and varied opinions passed, and it made us all the more keen to get through. It was generally the Sudd that was impressed on us as the hopeless obstacle, but some considered that the desert would beat us; so the days passed in speculation and talk.

We discussed everything, from elephants to skinning-knives. Everybody on board seemed interested. The fact of our projected route being an 'all-red' one appealed to most of our fellow-passengers. If we had planned to go through any territory, and not to restrict ourselves to an entirely British route, our problems would have been simplified enormously, for we could always have found roads, of sorts, and we could have avoided bridgeless rivers and swamps. But the desirability of blazing a trail through British Africa was superior to every other consideration.

It will be observed that in Uganda, where there are already certain transport facilities, the cotton industry is making great strides, and we knew that there and in the Southern Sudan the Government experimental plots were doing well. There is no reason why cotton should not flourish in other parts of Africa also, where at present it is impossible to make it pay because of the non-existence of transport facilities. Cotton can, of course, be carried on the heads of natives, but the cost of doing this for long distances makes it an uneconomic proposition.

We reached Cape Town on the 15th of September, 1924, on a cold, wet day. We could not see the Mountain as we came in, for mist was rolling down its sides in a white mass, and our first glimpse of the town was caught through big drops of rain. We saw people slipping about the wet docks with their coat collars turned up, and umbrellas opened. It was not a reassuring beginning, but our hopes were high, and we felt ready for anything

We were obliged to stay about a week in the city, our starting-off point, while our cars were unshipped, baggage assembled, food, spare parts, petrol, and oil collected, our kit sorted, and all the equipment packed in such a way that it could be suitably distributed over

the cars. The old warehouse in which our goods lay was being pulled down. Bricks and sand lay everywhere, and in the midst of this desolation our unsorted kit looked more mountainous than it really was, and we began scrapping things there and then.

We tried out the gramophone and chose a few of the many records which we had brought with us, adding the rest to the scrap heap. We sorted out bedding, blankets, and tarpaulins. We had most of the essentials in food, but bread, flour, and vegetables, and other perishable goods, had to be bought. Fred Law and I were commissioned to do this, and it occurred to me that it would be a splendid opportunity to slip in the despised tumblers! Besides the tumblers we bought some other "essential" things, but when we got back to the old warehouse C.T. said: "Some of the things you bought have arrived, but where's the food?" However, it is said that experience makes fools wise, and in time, certainly, I became wiser in the ways of quartermastering.

Our cups and glasses lasted about three days, and I realized C.T.'s point in saying that enamel mugs were the only things to stand the wear and tear of a motor expedition! We could, of course, have had neat little baskets for these things, but the cars were built to carry, not luxuries, but essentials.

Mr Glover was busy getting his cameras into order, Mr Law his first dispatch written, and C.T. his all-important cars assembled and overhauled. Also C.T. had found that our first dump had not arrived, and he was anxiously getting such matters fixed up before starting.

Each of us had his own appointed work. C.T., as the leader of this his own expedition (financed and organized by himself), intended driving one of the cars the whole

way. He decided not to take a mechanic with him, but to do all the mechanical repairs himself with the aid of Errol Hinds, who was prepared to do any work that had to be done. Errol and Mr Law were to share the driving of the second car.

I was second in command, and was ready to carry on if anything should happen to C.T. It was a serious responsibility, but I was prepared to get the expedition to Cairo somehow if it were possible for me to do so. C.T. and I spent long hours over maps and discussions of our projected route and other plans, and I knew what to do in certain emergencies. It was understood that I was to be nurse and doctor, and I learned, among other things, how to use a hypodermic needle, dress a wound, and nurse a fever patient. I do not say that I was very good at these things, but I had a working knowledge of them, and could make myself fairly useful. I was to keep the diary of the expedition, and this I did faithfully for the whole sixteen months. I would often sit up writing it after the others were gone to bed. This was not always easy, for after a sixteen-hour hard-going day you feel more like sleeping where you sit than summoning up your last remaining energy to write.

I helped my husband in whatever way I could, and generally looked after my four men. Their clothes were a perpetual trial to me, for they seemed to delight in tearing large bits completely out of them, and then saying in a casual way: "Just put a stitch in this, will you?" Their stockings will not bear speaking of—I hope never to darn another stocking in my life.

We were due to make our start on the 23rd of September. Everything was carefully packed so that the load was properly distributed over the two cars, and by the evening of the 22nd all was ready.

CHAPTER IV

THE START, THROUGH THE KARROO, TO ZIMBABWE

THE great day dawned!

Cape Town was beautiful in the early morning sunlight. At the City Hall whence we made our start all was movement and colour.

A big crowd waited to bid us godspeed. Women came forward and pressed our hands; men said: "Jolly good luck!" There were children, too, who looked on in round-eyed wonder at these people who were going out into the land of story-books, where fierce lions roamed, and thrilling elephants and leopards and cannibals dwelt! There were bicycles, dogs, cars, and people—lots of people, ranging from light tan to dark brown of skin—and above everything was a buzz of talk; photographers ran about taking pictures, newspaper reporters wanted stories, friends pressed forward to say a last farewell, and then we were off!

A cheer rose up, and I felt my heart miss a beat! It seemed too wonderful to be true—after all the mountain of work and worry we were actually on our way—and C.T. squeezed my hand hard. It was a moment that I shall never forget. It was fraught with a weird jumble of half-understood hopes and fears, and I took a vow that at all costs I should back C.T. up and do my best.

What a wonderful day it was! Everything was attuned to our feelings, the cars ran like angels (if angels do run);

Julius, our faithful henchman, grinned, and said : " *Bwana* and *Bibi*,[1] good luck to us all this day ! " How the flowers and grass shouted with colour ! It was a sparkling day, and a day of good omen, or so we believed. We ran through magnificent scenery, across mountains and streams, and we stopped for lunch in a delicious *kloof* by a little stream where arum lilies grew.

We camped the first night at Baynes Kloof in a disused stable, which once had been used by travellers for relay horses. It was tucked away in the hills, with the Hex river flowing about sixty feet below over gigantic rocks. Baboons barked, and we heard all kinds of eerie night noises.

I thought that I ought to help Julius to cook that first evening as I was not certain whether he was capable of doing it quite by himself, so I fried the eggs and potatoes, while he made coffee. I got my face thoroughly blackened, and my hands severely burnt, but I was supremely happy. The men got the beds made, and then we had our dinner by a big camp fire, and said : " This is life ! "

Afterward we played the gramophone and danced in front of our stable. We shed more kit at this place, including some tins of food. The wandering native who next passed by must have had a pleasant surprise.

Next day Mr Glover got his first opportunity to film at the Breide river, where the second car ripped her undershield off and stuck half-way through the river. We had to use donkeys to drag her out, which must have been a little humiliating for the car. I wore my boy's clothes for the first time, and had the greatest fun wading in to see if I could help—but this nearly ended in a tragedy because the current was so swift that I was almost washed

[1] Equivalent to " Master " and " Madam."

SUNSET ON THE VELDT

away. C.T., however, caught me in time and carried me out into safety on his back.

A pretty incident happened here when a dear little barefooted girl, looking rather like an Orpen drawing, came up and handed me a little bouquet, with a shy: "I brought you these, lady. I climbed the mountain this morning, and got them for you. They are mountain roses."

The nights were bitterly cold. We used every blanket we had, over our sleeping bags, but the wind cut through everything and we lay and shivered and longed for morning when we could run about and get warm.

After we left the mountains and got into the *karroo* the nights grew colder and the country bleaker. The *karroo* is a howling desolation where there are no trees worthy of the name, and the country is flat with a few bare hills jutting up here and there. There is very little grass, though sheep do well on the tiny, scrubby *karroo* bush. And yet there is a fascination in the place. The air is sparkling and clear, and you can see for miles upon miles over the flat plains, and the sense of immeasurable distance grips you and you find yourself liking it.

One night we were peacefully sitting yarning in camp when some one exclaimed: "Fire!" We all sniffed and agreed, but thought it must be C.T.'s old pipe, which was of the 'loud' variety, and after some thought decided that it could not be, for the smell of C.T.'s pipe was unique. Then we said, "It is you, Fred," only to find in the end that it was neither. It was G.'s bed, gently but successfully burning away to the rear of the camp. I suppose a spark from the kitchen fire had started the trouble. We quickly put it out with one of our fire-extinguishers, but G. mourned its loss, as it had been right across the Sahara with him.

The roads were fairly good. We hit bumpy bits, and ploughed through sand, but in comparison with what came later we travelled in comfort.

When we had been on our way about four days we camped at a tiny, poor, sand-swept farm in the *karroo*, where we met an old Dutch farmer and his wife who had never seen a train, but who had a son who had learned to add and spell. He was the schoolmaster, and taught all he knew to the little urchins of the neighbourhood. Before we left the next morning we presented the old Dutch lady with our camp-chairs, to her great delight. They must be there in the tiny 'sitting-room' now, with our names written on them.

During this stretch we were pursued by terrific dust-storms—blinding, suffocating dust, which penetrated everything. We breathed dust, and ate dust. We turned our backs to the gale, but even so our eyes were clogged with it, and our faces looked like grey masks. These storms were bad while they lasted, but fortunately they were spasmodic.

It is rather amusing, in view of our later troubles, to find that my diary for this time reads in one place as follows:

"I think this part of the journey we have just done, through the 'desolate *karroo*,' will have been, by the time we reach Cairo, one of the hardest and most nerve-shattering treks of the whole thing. There is no wood, very little water, and sand—lots of sand—always sand—wind, and stunted little bushes with no leaves on them. It has been so miserable at night, not having a fire to cheer us up. We can only manage enough wood to cook the evening meal, because more would mean carrying too much weight on the cars."

Still, it was rather hard for me. My skin was tender, and I had not yet toughened up. I tired easily, and longed to throw myself into a big, soft bed, after a long day of motoring.

We passed through numerous little towns known in South Africa as *dorps*. Most of them exude an atmosphere of Cape brandy and commercial travellers. Usually the houses are mere shanties, roofed with corrugated iron, and the whole effect is very ugly, but the occasional old Colonial houses which are to be met with stand out in pleasing contrast. We would halt sometimes in these places, when darkness overtook us, but we would always rather camp in the veldt, where we could sit out under the stars and snatch something to eat even if the dust-storms were fierce and the wind cutting.

The roads right through the *karroo* were very dusty and rather bumpy ; and it was strange and pleasant in this barren country to find, as we occasionally did, unexpected little fields of lucerne, with flowering fruit-trees bordering them. These little oases were a rest for our eyes; but they were only occasional glimpses to brighten this uninteresting stretch.

We reached Kimberley on the 2nd of October, and were met by the Mayor and other officials, with their friends.

Kimberley is a spread-out place, and rather ugly, with its corrugated-iron roofs sending off waves of heat in conjunction with the asphalt streets of the town. The population is a mixture of many races—black, brown, and white—who jostle each other on the narrow pavements. Native women with baskets of washing or vegetables on their heads elbow past ladies in Paris gowns, and shining motor-cars speed by the slowly moving ox-wagons on the dusty streets.

But Kimberley's chief interest lies, of course, in the fact that it is the centre of the biggest diamond industry in the world. Almost in the middle of the town can be seen 'the big hole,' enclosed with barbed wire, at the bottom of which is a great diamond mine where the men of 'De Beers' go backward and forward, and trucks with earth pass up and down in the business of getting diamonds for the world.

The next day we camped at the Vaal river, where we had to nurse our first casualty, Mr Law. The day before he had got a speck of metal in his eye, which had to be extracted by a doctor. The lining of the lid was lanced, and altogether he had rather a bad time.

We got off again the next day and had our first breakdown about twenty miles from the railway line. We were delayed there almost a week while we waited for our back axle-shaft to be sent down from Johannesburg. We drove the other car to the station, and stayed in a funny little country hotel. This was owned by a family of a rather gay disposition, who concluded that we needed a change from the serious business of an expedition, and set themselves to entertain us. They took great pride in a crazy old piano they possessed, and played us ragtime on it for hours on end, while we sometimes danced on the veranda. Once, when they thought we had been sufficiently cheered with music, they said: "Now, you people, you must come for a ride!" This sounded promising, so we followed them to the stables, which proved to be somewhat dilapidated sheds. Here we found the horses as decrepit as the stables, and so weak-kneed that we hardly dared to mount them in case they should break. Our fears seemed to be confirmed when we found that it was impossible to move them! They stood stockstill, until, I presume, it occurred to one

of them that he would like a change. Then they went off, full steam ahead, and stayed not for stock nor for stone, nor for holes. Of the latter there were many, and they barely missed them. As this hotel was situated close to an unfenced mine-shaft we felt pretty certain that these queer beasts would end by decanting us into the shaft. However, somehow we avoided that, and arrived back safely. When we dismounted, and turned to the horses, their expressions showed so plainly that they were enjoying the joke, and had done it on purpose, that we all felt a little sheepish with them.

In spite of these diversions, it was disappointing getting hung up so early in the journey, but we consoled ourselves with the thought that a bad beginning often means a good end. On about the sixth day we got away once more. We passed Potchefstroom, and were met outside Johannesburg by representatives of the Automobile Club, and a host of reporters and camera men. But by this time we were fairly used to being interviewed and photographed, and it was not such an ordeal as it had been in Cape Town.

We stayed in Johannesburg a short while, re-sorted our kit, and took on fresh provisions and spare parts for the cars. On October 25 we set out once more on the road. From there the journey became more interesting—the country was delightful and the climate milder.

It rained hard on our first night out from Johannesburg. Until then we had no tent, as we wished to avoid carrying the extra weight until it became essential. Our sole shelter was a tarpaulin, which let the rain in at the sides, and we spent a wet and uncomfortable night. However, the next day was sunny, and we made a good mileage, and camped in a little wood on the way to Pietersburg, in the Northern Transvaal. I mention this place because

it was one of our most pleasant camps on the whole trip. The grass was soft underfoot, the trees green and feathery, and our fire was the kind that jaded town-dwellers dream about. It blazed up into the night, lighting up everything for yards around, and we sat in utter contentment, with steaming mugs of cocoa, telling stories and listening to jazz records on our little gramophone. We even tried to dance, and Julius must have been fired by our attempts at the newest dancing steps, for we saw him later trying to do them himself before an admiring little audience of Transvaal Basuto! (It is very unusual in Africa to make camp without a crowd of natives appearing in the most astounding way, apparently from nowhere.)

It was at this camp that we heard our first 'Go-away' bird, who for ever shrieks "Go away," particularly when you are stealing with cautious footsteps up to game. There seemed to be thousands of birds chatting gaily together, including the adorable little honey-birds, which made us feel that we were really getting into the bush country.

The Northern Transvaal is beautiful. It has lovely mountains and grassy plains: the farms look well-cared-for, and the farmers prosperous. There are citrus estates in the Pietersburg district and the farmers cultivate grain. It was pleasant and peaceful winding in and out of the hills and valleys there, and we had the added joy of expecting to see game a little farther north.

Near Pietersburg we got our second casualty. My brother Errol stepped back into a hole, and sprained his ankle. The swelling came up like a balloon, and I had my second chance to prove my nursing abilities. Errol made no mention of the pain, and his only complaint was that

it would prevent him from hunting. He had heard that lions had been seen in the district, and he saw his chances of getting a shot fading into the ' what might have been.' We had a standing joke against him from that time on, for we all stoutly maintained that if there was anything within a radius of twenty miles into which one might fall, Errol would find it and fall into it!

We crossed the Limpopo river, but the only water we found was in a little rocky pool on the far side. It meant a struggle to get the cars across the river-bed; the sand came right up to the axles, and we again had to use donkeys to help us through. The country here was very dry.

Extracts from my diary from November 3 to November 8:

" We are making for Malangutsi to-day. The weather is changeable, at times cool and cloudy, sometimes very hot and steamy, with much heavier clouds. I am afraid this means we are running into the rains.

" We are in lion country now—thrilling. The cars are behaving splendidly. We made camp at 4.30 P.M. The others have gone off with their rifles. Errol and I went out with ours, but had no luck. He has gone off again. I assured him that I should be all right in camp, and I am writing this with my rifle over my knees, as this place is thick with leopards. I'd love to get a shot at one. About four miles from here we saw a splendid bull eland standing in thick bush, but did not shoot as we had enough meat. He was young, his coat light, and his horns fine. It is terrific fun being really and truly in game country. I hope I shan't wobble too much when I get the chance to shoot a really fierce beastie. It is a long time since I had any practice.

" The bush is thick and green as an emerald. The

naughty 'Go-away' bird is excitedly shrieking 'Go away' to every one, and a rabbit has just dashed out. Hope to get something in the bird line for dinner to-night. I made the men some lime-juice this morning, and they are lapping it up like anything. Lots of baobab-trees in this part of the country, and there are many superstitions about them. The natives believe that if you wear the flower you will get fever, and that if you wilfully cut the tree the first lion you go after will indubitably get you. The fruit is a hard pod, about a foot in length, and cream of tartar is found in it. The natives put milk into the pod, shake it up with the seeds inside, and drink it. I have tried it myself, and it is quite good.

"The roads have been rough and bumpy to-day. Errol's ankle is almost well.

"*November* 5.—Julius is a great man among the local niggers. When we camp he collects a few and makes them work, sometimes for love and sometimes for a tin of bully. He looks beautiful to-day, in long under-pants that go right down to his feet, shorts over these, and on his feet natty veldtschoen and mauve socks!

"There is game here, judging by the fresh spoor, but we haven't seen any. I think it must have moved farther off. There is supposed to be buffalo at the Bubye river. I wish I could catch a baby ape.

"2.45.—By the Lord, a lion—truly! I can hardly write. C.T. and the others have gone after him. An enormous creature. We just saw him flash through the bush. I'm waiting here, haven't got proper shoes on for dashing on with the others. I've got two weapons ready though, if he should turn back in this direction!

"They are back—no luck, and he was such a beauty. We have to make camp near here. I hope he won't come

NATIVE WOMEN WITH BASKETS OF HIPPO MEAT

sniffing at my sleeping head to-night—I like to see my lions!

"*November* 6.—Heat, like nothing on earth. I almost have to gasp for breath, but the camp is rather a nice one. This morning we went out early before cars were packed, and saw lots of spoor of eland and koodoo, but saw nothing in the flesh. We need meat, but the game here is wild and suspicious and you have to work very hard to get anywhere near it.

"Run out of cigarettes. This is hard—I'd like some chocolates too. To-day I don't like being 'an explorer' a bit. My skin is getting hard, and my knees are scratched to pieces, but I like my shorts, and would not change them for a skirt. I am trying to forget that I am a woman; it isn't always easy, but I am sure it is the only way to get through. But how I would love a big bath and some silky clothes to wear, just this once!

"I lose track of the days. I wonder if it's Friday or Sunday?"

The next day Mr Glover shot a hippo. It was on the Lundi river, where we had heard that there were crocodiles to be found. Mr Glover wished to get some pictures of the beasts, so he and Errol wandered to some pools higher up in search of them. They saw shapes in the water, but nothing plain enough to be photographed, and they were just on the point of returning to camp when a big thing rose out of the water. It was a hippo. Mr Glover got an ear-shot at it, and killed it outright. There was intense excitement on the part of the natives, who seemed, as usual, to appear out of the air. They love *nyama*[1] more than anything, but the trouble was to get the huge animal out of the pool: the natives would not

[1] Meat.

go in for fear of crocodiles, so they decided to wait until morning, when it would have risen higher out of the water, making it possible to get a rope round it to drag it out.

Errol came for a rope and took me back with him. I saw dozens of natives squatting on the bank daring each other to go in after the hippo, the older men making the inevitable jokes about the cowardice of the younger generation. They told them how brave they themselves had been when they were young men, and that a mere crocodile was as nothing to a man who *was* a man. The despised ones took no notice of these gibes, and merely grinned.

We returned to camp by moonlight, and the bush was so thick on the banks that we had to walk on the partially dry river-bed. It was an uncomfortable walk because of the rocks; they looked so extraordinarily like crocodiles —every time I stepped on one my heart almost stopped beating! The moonlight played funny tricks with things and that river-bed seemed to be infested with all the ferocities in Africa. I was glad when our two-mile walk was over.

The next day the hippo was hauled out with the rope. One young native, braver—or perhaps more foolish—than the rest, plunged into the pool and attached the rope to the head, and the others pulled the beast out.

Hippopotamus is considered a great delicacy by the natives. They eat the meat and render down the large quantities of fat for cooking purposes. After a lot of haggling and argument between themselves, they went off happily with huge chunks of meat, and that was the last we saw of the hippo and of them.

WITH C. T. ON THE ACROPOLIS

CHAPTER V

ZIMBABWE TO BULAWAYO

WE reached Zimbabwe to see a blood-red sun sinking behind the hills, and the ruins touched with colour and purple shadows. The whole country, as far as the eye could see, was bathed in colour. The Zimbabwe ruins are on a high plateau and we camped beside the ancient temple, part of the outside circular wall of which is as perfect to-day as when it was made, thousands of years ago.

We were all impressed with the place: it seemed to breathe of mystery and forgotten things, and we could almost see white-robed priests solemnly pacing through the narrow, winding passages. It is an oft-visited place, but in spite of that it affected me as much as if it had been a discovery made by us alone. I almost expected the Queen of Sheba to appear at any moment, and it pleased us to think that this place, Zimbabwe, belonged to her. Nothing is known for certain about it, but it is supposed that Zimbabwe was a gold mine in the days of Sheba and King Solomon, and that the mine was worked by the people of one or other of them. The acropolis on the highest hill, and the temple, were built of granite. What patience and labour must have been expended in the erection of the buildings! The walls, in parts, are in perfect condition, in spite of the fact that no mortar was used, and the granite looks as if it had been fashioned but yesterday.

We stayed there a few days, writing letters and doing

odd jobs. C.T. got busy at his engines, keeping everything in perfect running order, with Errol at hand to help. We camped under a big shady tree, with the cars drawn up side by side. I had a great pile of stockings to darn—holey stockings dogged me throughout Africa!

Mr Glover, with his cinematograph camera, photographed us climbing the acropolis, and my diary records my private feelings at making this ascent for the first time, by moonlight, on the previous night:

"Last night we made this difficult ascent, which is like walking up the side of a house. We had to pass up narrow and steep stairways, all closed in at the sides by massive granite boulders, then through dark, dank doorways. Bats and owls flew eerily about. It was almost more than I could bear, but still thrilling.

"I think this is the most spooky place I have ever been in at night. Quite often, in the half-light of the moon, I would find myself cut off from the others by a wall or a sheer face of rock, and a beastly bat would fly out and bash me in the face. I have my suspicions that losing me was a put-up job by the others to test my courage. I don't mind admitting that the shivers down my back have never been so creepy, not even when I was a kid, and my naughty brother made horrible noises at me in the dark. Errol and G. dared me to follow them up the most dizzy heights, but the ruffians didn't beat me."

My diary also gives a little incident characteristic of our camps at the time: "Fred woke up last night, and saw what he thought was a dog walking between the beds. He dozed off, then woke again, to find a leopard sniffing at his head. He sat up, and yelled, 'G., there's a leopard in camp! Get your rifle!'

"Quick to the rescue, and eager in any case for a shot

A CORNER OF THE ZIMBABWE RUINS

at a leopard, G. seized his rifle and dashed off after it. After a while he returned, not having seen his leopard, and was astonished to find Fred sweetly slumbering as if nothing had happened! G.'s language made the night pause and tremble.

"This morning the natives came in and said that the leopard took their goats last night, and they are now out hunting him with sticks. These Makalanga are a queer set of people, rather despised by the natives farther north as a degenerate race."

We were sorry to leave Zimbabwe, and yet glad to be on the road again. We passed a little hotel composed of *rondavels*, which are beautifully built. The roofs are of thatch, and on the hottest day they are as cool as anyone could wish. We went inside and spun a yarn with the man who runs the place and drank cold lemonade in tall glasses.

I shall never forget the view from Zimbabwe: it commands the country for miles. In the evening it was very lovely—you could see mist rising from the hills below, smoke fires burning, and away in the distance big grass fires blazing. All the huge rocks looked purple and red at sunset. And the air! It was warm without being muggy, and there always seemed to be soft perfumed breezes blowing. There were natives feeding their cattle on the green veldt below, piccanins yodelling and shouting to each other, birds chattering, sounds of *marimbas* [1] being tinkled—sounds, muted sounds, that had travelled for miles until when they came to our ears they were beautiful.

I love the African evenings. If ever romance is abroad, it is then. There are very few things wrong with Africa to my mind, but one is that you cannot run away quickly

[1] Kaffir pianos.

enough if you feel you must get away from the bigness of it all. Sometimes it takes you by the throat, and makes you pant for the lighter and more frivolous things of life. Africa makes me feel when I am there that she has *got* me, and I always have a strange feeling that I shall never be able to leave her. There are times when your brain says "I hate you," but your heart knows it is a lie. There is an old saying that those who know Africa will return, and I think it is true. She is cruel and hard, but when she smiles she is divine.

After we left Zimbabwe we drove over a gorgeous road to Victoria. We could go all out, and it was a delight after some of the roads we had been over since we left the Northern Transvaal. We expected to reach Bulawayo in four days, and from there we proposed skirting the Gwaai Desert up to the Victoria Falls. The whole of this stretch had never previously been done by car. Captain Kelsey, who had attempted the Cape to Cairo journey, had gone over part of the ground, and had then followed the railway line. We were rather anxious to do this bit, because we had been told that it was utterly impossible to take a car through certain parts of it.

The climate was cooler from Victoria onward, and I felt much more fit. I had not become acclimatized to such severe heat as we had been experiencing, and it had made me feel limp and ill.

Rhodesia is lovely from here. Some of the scenery looks like a Bakst stage-setting. There are huge rocks piled one upon the other, and growing round them trees of artistic shape and colour, with golden fruit, larger than oranges, hanging from the branches. The natives call it 'kaffir-orange.' The skin of this delicious-looking fruit is bright yellow and gold, but like quite a lot of beautiful

things only the outside is desirable, the fruit inside is bitter and acid.

We were all badly shaken one evening about this time. It was just dusk. We had gathered the logs for the fire, and were sitting beside the cheery blaze, when Fred strolled in and said: "I've been stung by an old bug, I think." We looked at his hand, but could see nothing but a little red mark. Soon it began to swell, and I dashed to the 'kitchen' for hot water, and made him bathe it. In spite of this the swelling grew worse, and G. suggested the lance, whereupon Fred stoutly refused to be 'chopped up.' However, we insisted, sterilized the lance, and cut the swelling a little. Soon after, Fred dropped off in what appeared to be a dead faint. We got him on to the bed, and ran for brandy, iron and arsenic, and hot-water bottles. After a few minutes his eyelids fluttered, but immediately he went off again. We tried the same remedies, then stronger ones. At last we tried artificial respiration; we rubbed his arms and his legs, but it was no good. It looked very serious. C.T. and Mr Glover went off for a consultation, and I learned afterward that they decided that he was dead. I still stayed beside him, and presently the others came back. At last, after what seemed like years, we saw his eyelids flutter again, and he began to come to. The first words he was able to speak were: "Say, that was a new sensation!"

We examined his hand when he was better, but could discover only one small puncture, which disposed of the idea of its being a snake-bite. To this day we do not know which of the mysterious poisonous insects which abound in Africa had bitten him.

The following days it rained without ceasing, and a note in my diary reads:

"6.15 P.M.—Did anyone ever know such wretchedness? We've been stuck in mud for hours. The men are all digging, to get the cars out, and I have just got a miserable fire going under some thick bush. We had hoped to make Bulawayo to-day, but it is about 50 miles distant. The frogs are having a glorious time. Our old African frog croaks loud and long and defies the world. There are masses of scorpions and spiders of every variety in Rhodesia. We were all bitten by strange insects last night, but nobody was seriously hurt. The sunset is heavenly. Thank the Lord, we have some compensation.

"Sometimes I compare my small drab figure with a rather butterfly-looking little person who was 'me' just ten or twelve short, and yet ages long, weeks ago! To-day I present a quaint picture of a boy with my long mane shorn off, but I comfort myself with the thought that 'It was for the best.'—So much more comfy not having hairpins jabbing into a sensitive head!—and easier to wash in the bush too! But I dream of my missing hair as a fox does of his lost tail! My clothes are khaki, red-lined to keep the fierce sun's rays out, and instead of pleated georgette and ribbons I wear Aertex! My 'skirt' is a boy's 'shorts' and I wear a kind of jumper shirt and brogues and stockings. My hat is of the double *terai* variety.

"The complexion question is serious! I am almost resigned to being burned a rich brown, but what, oh, what about freckles? I have found a few more round my nose—C.T. says they are adorable—I don't believe him.

"But 'women explorers' can't have everything, can they? And I am beginning to be rather expert at doing without luxuries. I have to think, instead, of mending

clothes and doctoring people and prodding thorns out of various parts of their dear old anatomies, but I am completely happy and would not change places with anybody.

" There is an annoying insect up here which lays eggs on anything woolly, and when clothes are worn with these horrid things adhering to them it is rather dangerous, because the egg somehow works its way under the skin, and stays there until one notices a swelling and gets the living horror out. Only one member of our party up to the present has fallen a victim to this terrifying insect. It was extracted, and we are sending it home as our first specimen. I should prefer meeting lions to one of these.

" The rains look as if they have commenced, but owing to there having been very little rain last season we think that the ground will take a lot of soaking before we find ourselves stopped and held up by the wet."

About here we passed a Government forestry place, and a magnificent native mission. These missions do a lot of good in some ways, but I can't help thinking that our black brothers are, on the whole, better left in their natural state. Of course, I may be wrong.

When we reached Bulawayo, on the 25th of November, we stuck to our decision never to stay at hotels, if possible, so we drove the cars a few miles outside the town, and made our camp in what is known as the Bulawayo show-ground. It is there the Rhodesians have their annual cattle and agricultural show. There were nice little sleeping huts for us, and a big stone building where we parked the cars. We had to camp here for some weeks, because the axle on the second car was weak, and C.T. had decided that a new one must be put in. He also made up his mind to have a trailer built, the reason being

that we could relieve the back axle by shifting part of the weight on to it. Of course this meant that the engines would have the added weight of the trailer to pull, but they were powerful and could well stand the extra strain. We all became very busy, and C.T. and Errol lived in a world of grease and spanners. They looked after those cars as if they were babies, for they knew that hard times were coming and that terrible strains would be put upon them, and they determined that nothing should be left to chance—that everything humanly possible to ensure our getting through successfully should be done.

What with furbishing up the cars and building the trailer it was some weeks before we could leave Bulawayo. It was a quaint life. I almost forgot, on occasions, that we were travelling to Cairo. It seemed that we were settled in that showground for good. There was a kitchen where Julius cooked; we had a table, and—luxury of luxuries —chairs!

While we were in Bulawayo we went out to the grave of Cecil Rhodes. His resting-place is in the Matopos, where the granite rocks, swept by the winds, in their lonely grandeur command the country as far as the eye can see.

It was there he came, when he lived, and sat alone and dreamed and planned schemes for the opening up of Africa. He would ride out on his pony to his beloved Matopos, and spend hours there where he now lies buried, looking out over the glorious country, his soul's vision going beyond, ever on along the trail on which his heart was set, which led from south to north through the entire continent.

His acts were as great as his dreams; he accomplished much and wished to do more for his beloved Africa, but

RHODES' GRAVE

his spirit has not died and his great work still goes on. Men are following the trail he pointed out, and we hoped as we stood there that perhaps we too were helping forward a little the complete realization of his most cherished dream—the opening up of Africa.

We met Sir Charles Coghlan, Premier of Rhodesia, who was interested in our trip, and the Governor sent us a telegram in which he expressed his good wishes for our success, and assured us that we could at any time have any help we might require from Rhodesia. This was very encouraging, and indeed every one in Rhodesia was most hospitable and kind, for at that time we needed a cheering word. One page of my diary written during our stay in Bulawayo reads:

"To-day is a kind of heart-sick day for me. I feel lonely. I should not feel like this, I suppose—I have the others; but somehow I need a woman friend to-day. It is trying to be continually with men, even if they are dears. I have never realized this before, but now I wish my sister were here. Very likely this fit of the blues is just liver, and a case for a jolly good walk! It is raining like mad: lightning and thunder tearing up the sky."

We knew now for certain that Fate was against us; we recalled what the Makalanga had told us three weeks previously: "New moon and rain—plenty, plenty more rain." And they were right, it did rain. All the time we were in Bulawayo we felt miserable and worried. At first we hoped that these were merely tropical downpours which would not last long, but the days dragged on, and still it rained steadily. It was heartbreaking to know that the country was getting more sodden every day, and that we should be compelled to struggle through the mud as best we could. Normally, the distance from Bulawayo

to the borders of Tanganyika Territory (1200 miles), where we had expected to meet the rains, could have been traversed comparatively easily, with the exception of the Gwaai Desert. But 'the rains' descending upon us at this early stage meant months of anxiety and hardship; indeed, there was even a question as to whether we could get through at all. We thought we had known what we should be in for, but the realization was worse than our worst fears.

CHAPTER VI

BULAWAYO TO DETT

IT took us four months to do 380 miles: it almost broke our hearts. I cannot write a vivid word-picture of that period, for it would be like trying to describe pain after you have no more pain. You simply know that it hurt at the time you had it, and it remains a blur in your mind. I feel that this period, during which we felt and suffered so much, might be understood better if I insert extracts from my diary.[1]

We had to push on somehow, or abandon the expedition for months. My husband felt that we could not do this, so indeed did we all. We had a kind of forlorn hope that the rains would abate and that we might be able to make some headway.

We left Bulawayo early one morning through a drizzle of rain, the sky grey and ominous, and the road soft and muddy after we had done only a few miles. I sympathized with C.T., for I knew how he was fighting against odds, and admired his tenacity of purpose in carrying on in the face of adverse criticism from the many people who said that it was useless to do so.

Our days were a succession of weariness and monotony. We ploughed through thick, slimy mud, and when it became too heavy we had to stop and dig the wheels out. We would then go on a few yards and sink again, as deep

[1] Throughout the book I shall adopt this method. If occasionally I touch on matters already described in the narrative, readers will get a more vivid and spontaneous account from these rough scribblings made at the time.

as, or deeper than, before. Our powerful engines were useless in this mud, for they simply spun the wheels round and dug the cars deeper in, without moving them forward an inch. On some days we would progress two miles; on others if we gained six we considered that we had won a victory. We did everything possible to get on. We built platforms of logs, we made surfaces of branches; sometimes we used oxen to haul us out, but nearly always the block and tackle, which we had to pull on ourselves. At times we would get on to what looked like hard ground, but would generally find that only the surface was hard, for the cars immediately broke through the crust, and again the labour of getting them out of the mud had to be begun.

There were places where the road became a river, with the water up to the axles of the cars. When this happened we had to make our way up on to the hill-tops, where, it is true, there were no rivers, but even there the ground was spongy and soggy.

We tried wire-netting as a solution to our troubles. This proved to be quite useless, because if the netting did not become completely submerged in the mud as soon as the front wheels got a grip on it, then it slithered out sideways and missed the rear wheels altogether.

We were always wet. Even if it did stop raining for a while the atmosphere was so damp that our clothing, blankets and leather had not a chance of getting thoroughly dry, and became mildewed. Our shoes were always wet, and throughout these months of rain we could never find a dry place on which to camp. Our tent was necessarily small, and was constantly in danger of being blown away during the big storms. The rain would pour down during the day, and become literally torrents at about four

PLOUGHING THROUGH MUD

o'clock in the afternoon, and so continue for hours. It would usually cease during the early hours of the night, and begin again after an hour or two. Thunder crashed and roared, and lightning ripped around us, striking down large trees close by.

The worst of this period of rain was the monotony of it. There was nothing but heartbreaking work, nothing to read, and often very little to eat. We had to do without cigarettes, too, and we were bitten by spiders and scorpions and other poisonous insects. We got septic scratches and sores which took a long time to heal.

During the stretch from Gwaai to Dett, where we tried to keep to the hill-tops, we were constantly chopping down trees to clear a track. We picked out the highest ground we could find, but even then it was completely soddened by the rains, and we hardly made headway.

We scrapped the tops of the cars and the trailer at Nyamandhlovu, in Rhodesia. Their weight was too great to take them through that mud, but we felt a pang at losing them, particularly the car-tops, for we had attached great importance to them, as they were to have been clamped together and used as a boat for the cars, should we come to rivers without bridges. Now we had just to leave it to chance, as it was impossible to get through with them. The tarpaulin roofs we erected in their place were inadequate and uncomfortable, as the deluging rains came right through them, and we could not keep the loads dry.

We knew before we started on our journey that the rains would overtake us, but we had thought that we should be in Northern Rhodesia, or even up to the borders of Tanganyika Territory, before this happened, and that we should be able to settle down in a comfortable base camp, and do some scientific work and game photography in the

brighter intervals. The natives told us that they were the earliest and heaviest rains they could remember, and we were caught in a part of the country where there was nothing to do but struggle on somehow. There was no game—nothing but mud, forests, and only a very few natives.

One of the first entries in my diary of this period reads:

"*Dec.* 25, *Christmas Day.*—Rain and mud. The trailer is useless—it impedes our progress. We stick hopelessly in the mud, and have the added work of digging it out, as well as the cars. We have decided to abandon it. Can anything be more beastly than this Christmas Day? Nothing, unless you compare it with the trenches during that awful time of continuous rain during the War. I can dimly realize what our dear old men endured then—we are so wet and cold ourselves. The mud is up to the axles, and the rain has come down steadily all day. There is no break in the heavy grey clouds.

"*Dec.* 26.—Still it rains. It has not ceased. It is now 6.30 P.M. and there is no sign of it breaking. Last night we managed to get the small tent up, after valiant efforts on the part of the men. The wind was strong, and as fast as a tent-peg was stuck into the ground it was swept out again. It took five men almost an hour to make any impression on that tent. It was cold, and the rain went through everything. When the tent was fairly secure the next item on the programme was to get our chop-boxes and guns out of the wet. By the time this was done the floor of the tent resembled dough. Our feet stuck to it. The kitchen awning was the next to be erected. We got the tarpaulin up, too, with difficulty, because as soon as one end was fastened down, the other would fly loose. When everything was done Julius managed to cook something hot under his shelter, and we put up our little

HOPELESSLY STUCK

table, with my bright yellow scarf over it for a tablecloth, and decorated it with some Christmas things we had brought from Bulawayo. We had some big gay crackers and an iced cake, crystallized fruit and a little champagne, which we drank out of tin mugs. Our plum pudding was a complete success, with a sprig of holly on the top. We lit it up with flaming brandy, and tried to feel Christmassy —and all the while water ran in rivulets over the floor. The rain trench that had been dug outside overflowed in no time, in spite of the runway. After dinner we played the gramophone, and G. and I made the others laugh by trying to dance, with our feet firmly stuck in the mud. Fred insisted on doing a Hula dance—all this in a tent measuring eight feet square, and the mud beneath our feet inches thick. It may sound like fun when we get back, but now—try it, somebody!

"We heard that the rains will last until the end of March, that they are very early, and that it looks as though we were in for a worse time. Anyhow I hope Fate will be kinder to us. These setbacks cannot last for ever, surely? I doubt if we shall get through in a year—we shall not at this rate. Thank goodness we are pretty fit.

"We have decided to cut down food to the barest necessities as soon as our present store is finished. We shall take rice, Bovril, bully, salt, tea, coffee, meal, and dried fruits, and that is all; we *must* cut down weight again. Soon we shall be reduced to practically nothing at all.

". . . How it rains! During this time we have never worn dry clothes or slept in dry blankets. It is useless trying to keep dry feet. I hope that this wet will not bring out fever. As long as we keep fit, we shall be able to carry on.

". . . After much labour we have got the second car

out of the sea of mud in which it was stuck. It meant draining the ground, and building stones under each inch over which the wheels went. The block and tackle was used and wire-netting spread over the ground in certain places—a heartbreaking business. However, eventually we got her out—a great victory.

"*Dec.* 28.—To-day is a heavenly blue day. It seems incredible after the deluging rain. We are hoping to reach the Gwaai river in a day or two. Heaven alone knows what we shall strike after that.

"How perfectly beautiful the veldt is! Every blade of grass and every leaf glistens in the morning sunlight. The birds are happy apparently, for they are making a terrific din. To-day is one of the compensations of a life like ours. It is good to be alive. We are all happy.

". . . Yesterday was a bad day on the whole. We started at 11 A.M., after getting the trailer out of the mud, and got about three miles, when we stuck again. We notice that wherever there are mopani-trees the ground is black and treacherous and we sink in deeper than in other places. The trailer is a wash-out. We are going to scrap it.

". . . C.T., Errol, and Mr Seward[1] went out on the road for ten miles to 'look-see,' and find whether we should lighten the cars by scrapping the roofs.

". . . We have scrapped the roofs, with more than half of our personal and other kit. The roads are utterly poisonous with black clay. The cars look rather snappy and racy without their tops, but they are going to be dreadfully uncomfortable now, with only a tarpaulin roof. The sun is so blistering here, when it *does* shine, to say nothing of the rain.

[1] Mr Seward is a young Englishman we met at Nyamandhlovu, where he was O.C. of the Mounted Police.

G. AND HIS CAMERA CARRIERS

" We hope to make the Gwaai river to-morrow. The people here seem to think we shall not do it. To-night is New Year's Eve. Strange to think that another year has flown.

" *Jan.* 2.—Reached the bank of the Gwaai river last night. The Gwaai in flood is lovely. In the ordinary way it is dry and sandy. Now it is a broad and swift river, dashing over the rocks below the drift. We camp here to-night, and attempt the crossing to-morrow. The trees are large and shady and there is a riot of grass, cool and lovely to behold. On the other side of the river are wagons waiting for the river to go down—it is too deep and swift for their oxen at present."

The next morning we awoke feeling ready for anything. The river seemed shallow enough below the drift —there seemed to be a clear, shallow strip right across. C.T. took the first car down the steep bank, and we thought that it would be plain sailing right through, but after he had driven her a couple of yards we were horrified to see the car tip over to the side and stick. He tried to go forward, then tried to reverse and get her back, but without success.

On the opposite bank was an old settler, laid up with fever. He wanted to get to a doctor, but his oxen could not get through with the wagon until the flooded river had subsided a little. C.T. got into communication with him, and the kind man said that we could use his oxen to pull us out backward, which would enable us to make a fresh start. All this took some hours, for the oxen would not pull well, and the bank was very steep. Eventually, however, they got the car back, and C.T. was able to make a second attempt.

By this time we had discovered that the shallow strip

below the drift was the wall of a dam : it made a very narrow causeway, but it was the only way to cross. C.T. drove each car at a snail's pace, the river, meanwhile, crashing on, and all but washing the cars away. It was a very anxious time for us all until they were safely on the other side, for an inch in the wrong direction would have meant dashing the car and driver into the flood below.

" *January* 5.—We drove through the bush all day yesterday, and to-day the so-called road is impassable. It is like a river—or rather a duck-pond, for there are hundreds of wild duck swimming on it. We are all very disheartened. C.T. got us together to discuss the thing and he calculates that at the rate we are progressing it will take us seven years to reach Cairo! There is only one thing to do, and that is to take to the hill-tops, regardless of the absence of any sort of a track, realizing that we shall have to hack our way through inch by inch. Even so, we think that, providing the ground is harder, it will, in the end, be quicker going. The magistrate at Tojolotjo has lent us a native guide. Without him we should be stranded, because the bush is not bush, but dense forest.

" . . . It looks as if we were in for more rain—in fact, it is raining hard now. Hope to goodness it will not continue for long—our passage through the bush will be hopeless if it does. The ground is very soft as it is—we should never have got over a mile of it, had we kept the roofs of the cars. The heat is unbelievable, but we feel thankful to be able to get on at all.

" G. has doctored quite a number of kaffir babies, and to-day I bandaged a little one only two months old. There are so many sick babies. Most of them have chest troubles, and horrible skin diseases caused through neglect. The

TENDING A SICK KAFFIR BABY

word seems to have gone round that the *Incosicase*[1] is a good doctor, and I can see our *mouti*[2] getting less, and our bandages fewer, at this rate.

"Yesterday C.T. dealt with a small boy with a badly wounded head. The little fellow had fallen foul of a cow while milking it. The native methods of doctoring are primitive in the extreme, and they had plastered up the wound with cow-dung. C.T. got him clean, and we found that he had a tremendous gash, from the top of his head right to his chin. The wound was dressed in the usual way, and he was an extraordinarily brave little chap, for he did not flinch once during this operation.

"*Evening.*—We have fought every inch of the way and have not gained the Gwaai Siding. It is now 7.30 P.M. and we have only just reached a native village, some miles from Gwaai. We had ten natives blazing a trail for us through the bush, hacking off branches and clearing stumps. Heavy going—sand thick, and undergrowth thick too. We did about two miles per hour. Hope we shall get out of this soon. It might go on until we get through to Gwaai. Temperature 99° to-day.

". . . We are waiting until the boys have made a kind of path for us through the forest. We are tired of crawling behind them, waiting every yard or so. It is now 12.30 P.M. and hot. We push off in a few minutes again. Gwaai is not more than about two miles distant in a straight line, but we shall only with luck reach it to-night, as we must go round ten miles. We are reminded of the story of the Native Commissioner who, after completing a survey, put in for his expenses for

[1] Chieftainess. [2] Medicine.

carriers for 125 miles between two places. The authorities returned his accounts, saying that they did not understand them, as the two places indicated were in fact only 60 miles apart as the crow flies. They received the same accounts again, with the added comment, 'I am *not* a —— crow.'

"In this native village is a kind of mixed bushmen race. They are not pure stock, having Matabele blood in their make-up. It is terribly hot with the roofs off, and the tarpaulin shelters are quite inadequate. I do not like intense heat, and I envy the others, who do.

"*Jan.* 8.—We got to Gwaai Siding last night. It was heavy going, but we did it. C.T. is finding out about the tracks ahead. There are two, and he has not yet decided which to take—the one round by Jowitt's farm, or the fire-path[1] by the railway line. They are both bad.

"This evening I watched the Victoria Falls mail train pass. It was tantalizing to catch a glimpse of the spotless linen and gleaming glass in the dining saloon. The passengers looked amazed at seeing a white woman standing alone on the railway embankment, for this is 'wild' country, and there are very few white people here. C.T. has decided to go round by Jowitt's.

"*Jan.* 9.—We have done something to-day which every one said was impossible. We got up the big sandy hill this side of Gwaai on our own power, and we made the Impindo *vlei*,[2] fifteen miles from there, in three hours. We felt that this was marvellous going, for it can be realized what the veldt was like, with sand, sodden

[1] Burnt clearing on either side of the railway line, so that bush may not be set alight by sparks from the engines.

[2] Marsh.

CROSSING THE GWAAI RIVER OVER THE DAM WALL

ground, and trees which had to be chopped down. We are pleased with our effort. We are now on the strip of country where *no* other car has ever been and where people said we should be utterly 'lost and bogged.' I pray that the rest of the trip to Victoria Falls will be as successful as this last bit.

"*Next day.*—Have to stay here a day. The *vlei* is flooded with the rain from the hills. We have to cross it to get to higher ground. This *vlei*, I should think, is about a mile and a half across. The water is above our ankles. The *vlei* is full of a swordlike grass, which cuts, and there are thousands upon thousands of leeches. We have a native policeman with us who has not seen leeches before. He went into the *vlei* with C.T. and Errol, felt some leeches on his legs, and dragged them off in terror, thinking they were young snakes. The blood ran furiously from his legs, of course, and C.T. had to calm him, and tell him that when leeches get on any tender part of you you must not drag at them, otherwise the skin comes off, and leaves sores. You must either let them gorge themselves, or pinch them hard behind the back of the ears, until they let go! Both cars are bogged in the flooded *vlei*.

"*Later.*—To get the first car out meant building little platforms of logs every few yards to give the wheels a grip, and the same performance will have to be gone through to-morrow to get the other car through.

". . . Started off again. Got second car out of *vlei* quicker than we hoped. Got 100 yards and stuck again. We have the first car out and expect to get the other out quite soon. Great game this! It rains again to-day. Fine, wintry rain.

". . . I've heard of regiments of fleas attacking

people, and now it's actually happened to us! We made our beds in a house here, but later found that the mud floor was seething with fleas. We had scores of them on us, and all over our clothes. Our 'flea-bags' are now literally flea-bags. It will take months to get them clean.

". . . Had a hard day getting through almost impossible pieces of country. Feel rather ill to-day. Touch of fever, I think. Did only two miles in nine hours. The farmers here are hunting a man-eating lion, who has made off with two natives.

". . . Same as yesterday. Running out of food. We did twelve miles to-day. Better than most days.

". . . The continual grinding of the cars in low gear seems to get in my head. It is rather nerve-shattering. We have done six miles only to-day. Cars stick every hundred yards as usual. Got stuck in the middle of a sand-soak this evening. Cars won't budge.

"*Jan.* 21, 9 A.M.—Still in the same place. Boys working like mad. Mosquitoes and gnats here in millions. We are all bitten to pieces, and little honey-flies go for our eyes. All the tea and coffee is gone, so it means water all the time. Dett is about twenty miles from here, and we haven't a hope of getting there for ages. *If* we strike hard ground we may be able to make some headway.

"7.20.—Reached Mr Chatham's farm. He is a dour Scotsman, but exceedingly kind. We were quite out of food, and he has fixed us up with everything. We shall remain here a few days while a runner goes into Dett station for our reserve of petrol—we got here on our last cupful. This is *literally* true. We are camped on a lovely spot. It looks rather like an English park. We

NATIVES CHOPPING A WAY THROUGH THE FOREST

had a bad time crossing the drift here. After having hundreds of bushes and trees cut to make a firm bottom we got through all right with the first car, but Fred drove slap into a tree and got himself bogged as well.

". . . Lovely day, no rain. Lumbi, temporary help, washed our things, and we dried the bedding in the sun. It needed it. Lumbi is a quaint-looking person. He is tall and narrow, wears limbo round his waist and a kind of military tunic, too high in the waist, which brings his belt right up under his arms. He is terrifically proud of this tunic, and of an awful old cap which he must have bagged from some farmer. Always before commencing work he takes his precious cap off and puts it in a place of safety!"

The following night we had a nasty experience. In the afternoon Fred and I had gone up the river to meet the others, who had gone off for a day's fishing. We got there safely, without getting hopelessly lost in the thick bush, by following a little stream which we knew would lead us to the main river. We arrived at 6 P.M. C.T. was still fishing when we got there and it was with the greatest difficulty that I eventually persuaded him to return to camp. I kept on reminding him that the sun set at seven. "Oh," he said, "it won't take an hour to get back." It was a quarter to seven before we got away. The men would not return by the path along the stream, and said it would be quicker cutting across the veldt. We started off, after a deluge of rain, and kept up a good pace until it grew dark. By this time we were beginning to say: "Are we going in the right direction?" "I think we should go more to the west." "No, I think a little to the south"; and there we were—lost. All we knew was that we had to walk between two ranges of hills to get back

to camp. That sounded all right, but it did not work; for, in the dark, we simply made circles and S turns. Missing camp, as we knew, would be the easiest thing in the world, as none of the camp lights would carry far, and we could easily walk past them. At 7.30 it began to rain in torrents, and we could not see a foot ahead. Lightning, though horribly vivid, was too swift to show us the way. We all gripped each other by the belt, and kept steadily on. We crashed into holes, pools of water, rocks, high grass that cut our knees, and, worst of all, thorn-trees, and the rain froze us in our thin clothing, so at last we decided to stop and get a fire going. We hunted around in the dark and succeeded in finding soddened wood—but it was a waste of time, for we found that no one had any matches. But we had one consolation in declaring that we could never have lighted it in any case with that wet wood. So we just pushed on into the night. We climbed rocky hills, and then 'unclimbed' them again, always trying to get some idea of where we were. We had to keep moving, because we were nearly frozen. We fired off our rifles, but did not hear an answering shot until 10 P.M., when we heard one to our right. We stumbled in its direction, answering as we went. After a long time we heard a shot to our left. Again we made for the sound —again we lost it. Eventually, after scrambling through *dambos*,[1] thorn-trees, and getting our knees torn on rocks, we seemed to be approaching a dim light. None of us was sure, but we shouted and fired again, and, to our joy, we got an answering shot. After a while the light got brighter, and we were within hailing distance, not of the camp, but of good old Mr Chatham, who had come out with a lantern to look for us. We were miles from the camp

[1] Forest clearings, sometimes marshy.

STUCK IN A BOG

and he and his boys had been out since dusk looking for us, because he knew the difficulty of finding the way in this country.

"*Jan.* 27.—Got to Dett station last night, and are now on the road again. We are right out in thick bush, with just the railway line running through, and a tiny house where the ganger lives. He will not hear of our sleeping outside, because the lions are very troublesome just now.

"Our last bog was the worst we have ever struck. The first car went down almost on to her side. Another six inches and she would have been over. We got her out with the aid of the other car and the block and tackle. Later we got them both across the Mabanji river. This is a very shallow and sandy river, about fifteen yards across, and of course both cars stuck. We did one at a time.

"Some miles ahead we have to go through the same performance, as the same river has to be crossed again. It winds like a snake; and we cannot go round the bend to avoid it because the bush is too bad; hence the double crossing.

"*February* 4.—Just off once more, and hope to get some distance covered—at any rate more than two or six miles as we have been doing. Three days ago we got a few essentials from a ganger on the railway line, some miles distant, but we have practically run out of everything again. Wankie is not far off, but it seems we cannot get any nearer. It is about twenty miles from here. Hope to goodness we reach it soon.

"Still the rain persecutes us. It seems interminable. It is hard to imagine a world without rain. I must get some rest. C.T. and Errol both have sore legs, rock

cuts that have somehow poisoned their blood. They are nasty-looking sores, and we are dressing them very carefully.

"It will be a relief in more ways than one to see open country again. The trees, with their everlasting *drip*, *drip*, *drip*, drive us mad."

LISTENING TO THE GRAMOPHONE

A BIG HIT

CHAPTER VII

DETT TO WANKIE

WE had been told by the stationmaster at Dett that the road to Wankie was fairly good, and, he thought, not too wet. "I shall wire the Native Commissioner in Wankie," he said, "that you will be arriving to-morrow at the latest."

Yet this stretch, normally a day's run by car, took us a whole month to do. We ploughed our way through mud up to the axles of the cars, the everlasting green bush drip dripped on us as before, and, in fact, it was very little different from our last 'road' from Bulawayo to Dett, except for a little diversity in the shape of numbers of rivers to negotiate. If we walked ahead to see the state of the road we got bogged ourselves. Finally, about half-way, we were forced to throw our hand in for three weeks, and just watch it rain.

It was difficult to find natives willing to swim the swollen rivers to Wankie for supplies, and we went very short of food. I shall always associate the thought of doves with this place. They cooed incessantly, and they, poor darlings, were the only meat we could get. We met so few natives that we concluded they had moved to higher ground when the game went. The few we did meet with, we hired with their oxen to help pull us out of the mud and across rivers.

During this time of enforced inactivity we tried to cheer each other by playing poker for our few remaining cigarettes. Our lives had narrowed down to just ourselves

and our thoughts and feelings, and we began to absorb each other to such an extent that we caught ourselves using each other's catchwords. After we had talked about books, music, and people, we seemed to have so little left, and yearned for new ideas. Our little gramophone was a consolation; we each had our own favourite record, and when it was played we conjured up memories of all the things we loved best in the outside world. C.T.'s was the hardest part, and I can imagine how difficult it must have been for him to keep hope bright and our spirits cheerful.

At this desolate camp we were visited by queer bugs and grubs of every shape and size. We killed many snakes, and scorpions were legion. Some of us were bitten by the latter, and one night we were sitting peacefully in our little tent when Errol was stung. We tied a ligature round his wrist, lanced the thumb and put permanganate in the incision. These bites are extremely painful. The next morning, when we took up the mattress on which he had been sitting, we found seven large green scorpions, with angry, curled-up tails; they had come in out of the cold, and snuggled up comfortably inside, for warmth.

One night the usual thunderstorm, with violent lightning and rain, burst upon us. It woke me, of course, and C.T. also, for I could hear him groping about for something in the dark. The gale was so strong outside that the tent began to wobble ominously. The whole thing shook and flapped. I stood on my bed and held fast to one of the poles—not that that would have made much difference, but I felt that I was at least doing something. Still C.T. searched, and then Mr Glover came in. "My shelter has gone," he said, "the wind has blown away my bed, and I think my arm's broken." By the bright flashes of lightning we could see him silhouetted in the doorway,

ONE OF OUR DREARY CAMPS

drenched to the skin, holding his wrist. Then at last C.T. found his matches! We had no candles, and the only light we could get was from the feeblest of oil lamps. We hung on to the tent, and finally, when the storm subsided a little, and the deafening thunder grew less, we got Mr Glover some drier garments, and found that his arm was not broken, but badly banged by the pole of his shelter as it flew into space and disappeared with other of his things. Still it rained, and we all spent the rest of the night huddled up on the two beds, playing card games, and 'throwing the bones.'"

Then after some days came a time of sunshine, which dried the ground a little, and we pushed on.

"2.30 P.M.—We have stuck four times since 9 A.M. Oh, how tiresome it is, and when we do get going, it is with bated breath and nerves all on edge, waiting for the next bad bit. We have done exactly three miles up to now. We are waiting for the boys to come and clear this bit down to the river, and also to build a kind of false bottom to it, with big trees. It is a good thing that the trees are easy to cut. It is very soft wood. The undergrowth is heavy here, and there are of course the usual millions of mosquitoes.

". . . Here we are definitely stuck for at least two days. The sun is shining this morning. We have got all our *impashla*[1] out to-day. It will be heavenly sleeping in dry blankets again. Our food is almost finished; we have nothing left but potatoes, three tins of bully beef, and two brews of tea. This bit from Dett to Wankie was said to be the best part of our road to the Falls. We think it the worst. It is nothing but streams and sand-soak.

" G. and Errol have gone to try for a buck. We have

[1] Belongings.

no soap at all. Perhaps we shall have to wash with sand! We cannot get any food from the natives. All their crops have been completely washed out by the rain, and they themselves have nothing but milk, and very little of that.

". . . Got through the Mabanji river to-day. Lot of work with block and tackle. The whole day has been spent in cutting down trees and laying them down in the drift to form a firm bottom over which the cars can cross. When the first car had barely got on to the opposite bank the river came down in a mighty flood. It simply came down in a wall of water. We heard the roar a mile off before it hit the drift, and we were horrified at the risk to C.T. driving the first car through. The flood, when it came, washed away all the tree trunks in the bed of the drift, and all the labour of getting it prepared will have to be gone through again to-morrow. We remain on this side and cross with the tent and kit to-morrow.

" We got a bad fright at 6.30 this evening, when that idiot Julius stood on the bank of the river and wailed 'Lifle! Lifle!' (rifle) '*Bwana*—lifle!' C.T. had been away all the afternoon exploring the other side of the river, and we naturally thought that in trying to cross it coming back he had been taken by a crocodile. We could not see Julius standing by the edge of the river as we were camped some way up the bank, but I grabbed the box of rifles, and dived for the first, which happened to be mine, and gave it to Errol, who flew down to the river and I followed with the magnum. All the while Julius wailed for a 'lifle.' Even Fred, Errol and G. looked a trifle white, and my feelings will not bear speaking of. We were furious when we discovered that the cause of all the excitement was a mere water-buck that had been caught whilst feeding in the reeds higher up, and washed down by the

ONE OF THE CARS BEING HAULED THROUGH A RIVER 76

flood. Julius, aghast at the thought of losing so much good meat, had thought that something should be done about it, but I felt almost like shooting him! C.T. calmly walked into camp at seven o'clock, with a dove—of all things—tied on to his belt. He had crossed the river supporting himself with a pole under each arm, as the current was so strong that without them he would have been swept away.

". . . Not much game between Dett and the Nantwe river. It comes and goes of course. Perhaps in a week's time the place will be full of it. We have another river to cross before we reach Wankie—one more river, one more river to Wankie. . . .

" 10 A.M.—Stuck again. The ground is so wet this morning that we shall probably do this every hundred yards, and the maddening part of it is that just here the top crust is mud, and only about ten inches down there is fairly hard ground. If we could have a few days of sunshine we should in all probability romp through this. I think we shall have to camp here, as the ground is getting worse every minute with this pouring rain. Lord, I'd like some of the comfortable and complaining people I've met to try this!

" Last night a Barotse boy played his little *marimba* to us. The tune was very simple and of perfect rhythm. The tone was soft and the whole effect very pleasing. We gave him 'sikis-pence,' which to him was a handsome gift, for his performance. Fred, not entirely without success, tried to play *Africa*, with its accompanying words of " You've an awful lot to answer for," on it, to the intense joy of the grinning Barotse boy, who sat near by beating time on one of Julius's old cooking-pots.

". . . We are camped in the heart of a kind of giant

bowl of foliage. There are hills surrounding us on all sides, and if you stand at the top of the highest hill, and look down, you see what appears to be an impenetrable forest. Then your eye catches the white top of our little tent, bravely holding its own in this overwhelming mass of green. There are thousands upon thousands of trees, and the undergrowth is terribly thick. There is a road, of sorts, which somehow leads through it. It is a mere track, in fact, which winds through the bush and dips into sudden streams and rivers. This is the track which goes from Dett to Wankie, and it has been a ghastly disappointment to us, for we were told that it was good. Well, perhaps it *was* passable in the dry season, but it is certainly not so now in the rains. It is almost too sodden for us to walk upon, and it can readily be understood that two large cars cannot venture two feet along it as it is at present; so here we are stranded about twenty miles from Wankie, and not a chance of reaching it until we have at least four consecutive days of drying sunshine, as the mud is a couple of feet deep in places. We have been fifteen days on the road since we left Dett, and we have done but twenty miles in that time. It is good to know that the rainy season will soon be over, and that then we shall be able to make good headway, and make up for so much wasted time. We still hope that we shall make the entire journey from Cape to Cairo in a year, or little more. C.T. says that he admires a beard, particularly a nice long white one, and feels sure that it will be his on his next birthday!

". . . By the law of compensation we have something to make up for this weary delay in the heavenly little streams which ripple over smooth stones all round our camp. I bathe every day in my own particular one, which is a mile away. It is the purest joy to sit on a smooth rock

ON OUR ' ROAD '

in the middle of the stream and feel the cool rippling water running over me, after an afternoon's tramp with the shotgun.

"This beloved stream of mine is surrounded by bright and shiny-leaved trees, in which the jolly old birds sing, and little blue monkeys chatter and gaze at me with bright inquisitive eyes. The sunlight, when there is any, gleams through the branches of the trees, and lights up the stream in streaks and splashes of silver and gold. There are feathery ferns growing in tree trunks and in the crevices of rock, where occasionally a rabbit dashes out and flees in bright-eyed wonder.

"Then I dress in my boy's clothes, which is not a difficult matter, and saunter back to camp. In the evening we all put on our mosquito-boots, take the nightly five grains of quinine, and thoroughly enjoy our evening meal, cooked by our precious cook-boy, Julius Mapata. We are always hungry—one must be, living this kind of life—and it is rather a calamity when we run short of food, as we so often do. Once we were reduced to one tin of Bovril and a potato, but something generally turns up, as now, when a native boy brings into camp a young goat, and the inevitable Africa 'koo-koo,' which is an extremely emaciated chicken long in the legs and tiny in body.

"*Feb.* 13.—Wrote letters and sent them into Wankie by the carrier who helped to bring out our stores. They arrived last night, but not a blessed line of mail for anybody. Fed up with this place! The delay is getting on every one's nerves, although I must say we are all behaving very prettily and not utterly loathing each other. Lost my knife. Errol lost his two days ago but I see that he has one hanging on his belt to-day. I must investigate.

"Hot day, clouds banking up again. Baboons barked all yesterday and again this morning. We heard a leopard during the night, so I expect that he was the cause of the commotion in the monkey community. We have been in this heaven-forsaken spot eleven days to-day. Later—I have found my knife!

"*Feb.* 16.—Weather changing from continuous fine slow rain to sudden torrential downpours. Again we had an upheaval last night, when lightning and some more terrifying thunderclaps burst upon us at about 4 A.M. Our tent just about held—it was touch and go. The wind almost tore the pegs out. For the second time G.'s shelter was completely ruined. The tarpaulin was blown yards away and his bed knocked over. He had to come into our tent. It was one of the most terrifying storms I have ever known, and I have seen a few too. Lightning tore the sky to ribbons, and the rain came down in drops as large as shillings. These sudden and fierce storms are a good sign, because they mean that the rainy season is drawing to a close—but one never knows.

"We are lucky to have escaped fever so far. Every one told us that we should surely all catch it this weather. Our feet are always wet, and our clothes seldom dry, so it is rather wonderful, I suppose. Quinine is running low.

"The smallest scratch we get becomes septic at once, no matter how careful we are. Grubs of every kind fasten on to our clothes, and creatures lay their eggs everywhere, and on occasions even under our skins. Our limbs sometimes swell up horribly and remain painful for days. We have never discovered whether it is caused by one of the thousands of poisonous insects which lie in wait for the unsuspecting one, or if it is just poisonous-grass cuts.

UP TO THE AXLES

". . . C.T. got car about two miles ahead. Hard going. Block and tackle and oxen working all at once. Mud up to our knees.

". . . To-day the second car attempted the strip, but it only got half way through the incredible mud. Awful labour. I have never dreamed there could be such thick, black slimy mud. It was worse for the second car, because the first one and the oxen had ploughed it up awfully. Errol and I moved camp about three miles ahead on to harder ground.

". . . We had a thunderstorm yesterday, the worst one yet. Lightning struck a big tree near our tent, shattering it to fragments. Some letters came to-day, but no English ones, which was a blow.

". . . C.T. and Errol have gone on to look at the rivers with boys. Hope, if the rain keeps off to-day, to be able to cross the river to-morrow. In a newspaper we got yesterday we read that up north the rains are pretty bad too. Let's hope that it will rain itself out now, and get the thing over. I can stand anything but this. As long as we keep moving, or doing actual work, I do not mind putting up with any discomfort or actual hardship —it is all worth it in a way—but this enforced idleness makes me shudder.

"There is a snake living beside our tent, a most elusive beast. I discovered him by putting my foot within an inch of him and Julius yelling: "*Bibi*, jump!" He wriggled away into his hole in a flash. We dug him out, and he darted off the end of the spade in the flicker of a bat's eye—whatever that may mean—and disappeared in the long grass. If he comes sneaking back, I hope to blight his young life with a shotgun, and have a snappy pair of shoes made out of the skin.

"We sent a boy into Wankie for quinine and food. This is becoming a habit.

"*Feb.* 22.—C.T. has gone on again with the first car, and hopes to clear three rivers. Glorious sunshine to-day. It makes us all bucked up and happy. No rain last night, either, so C.T. stands a chance of doing some good work on the road to-day.

". . . Left with C.T. in second car, after dawn this morning. He got the first car over four rivers yesterday. Lots of work, but he did it before dark. Good effort. To-day we have no such luck. Had an awful rain last night. Result, sodden road. We have crossed two rivers and are stuck practically at the bank of the second. No petrol. Have sent on to camp for some. The others are all ahead at the new camp and we are separated from them by a river or two.

"7.30 P.M.—We have camped to-night about fifty yards from place where we stuck. Got dark and couldn't go on. We had one of the worst rains and thunderstorms in all our experience. It simply came down in a solid wall. Rivers will be impassable to-night.

"Most of our food and kit has gone on. We had rice and stewed prunes, which we had to eat with our fingers, cooked in some old milk tins we had. By the grace of heaven we raked out some coffee, so we were all right for food. Our camp is distinctly a scratch one. No tent, but a buck-sail. Errol is ahead to look after camp. G. is here —the splendid man swam the river in an endeavour to get a jug of coffee to us. It has been raining on and off all afternoon until now, 10 o'clock. The boys are all sitting round their fires chatting merrily. Wonderful people. We have a big fire too, and it is most comforting, the three of us sitting under the tarpaulin looking at it but

hoping to goodness that Fred and Errol will not eat up all the stores in our absence!

". . . I left C.T. and trekked on at dawn for five miles with carriers. Was carried over the rivers, which have gone down tremendously since last night. The road seems slightly better. It was jolly walking through the bush in the early morning. The birds were busy singing and chattering to each other, and the air was sparkling and joyous, and I enjoyed being on my own. It is good to get away by yourself sometimes.

" Found Errol in camp, and eager to learn what had happened to us. Glory of glories! An angelic man in Wankie has sent us a box of grapes!

" Have sent boys into Wankie for petrol. Can't move the other car until it comes. C.T. and G. arrived in camp at 2.30 with boys and oxen. I believe, once again, that we are surely nearing the end of the rains. C.T. got a motor-paper. Interesting article about good new road from Nairobi to Lake Nyassa. This lies on our route, so we are jolly pleased.

" The latest addition to our camp is a perfect peach of a nigger. He is trying desperately hard to learn English. When he wanted to know whether the oxen should be hitched on to the car he said: 'Put horses on low house?' He does about six men's work and is a perfectly marvellous nig. We are taking him as far as Abercorn.

" C.T. was stung by a scorpion to-day. We others were a little way out of camp when it happened, so C.T. called to Julius to tie a ligature round his wrist, lance the place where he had been stung, and jab some permanganate into the cut—but Julius would have none of it, and demanded to know in which direction the scorpion had fled, and dashed off looking for it. Luckily some of us came upon

the scene just then, and gave C.T.'s hand the usual treatment for poisonous bites. We then heard a satisfied grunt from Julius, who had found and caught a scorpion and neatly snipped off the poor creature's tail, wherein lay the poison. He was quite amazed when C.T. stepped on it and ended its life. We gathered from what Julius said that C.T. would undoubtedly have died a horrible death and suffered the tortures of the damned if the tail had not been cut off that scorpion, and the beast allowed to crawl off into the bush and suffer, and repent his vileness, and die; but as it was, the vile creature's tail had been removed, and C.T. would now live; but it had been a mistake to interfere with the charm by killing the scorpion outright, and he was not surprised that C.T. suffered a good deal of pain!

". . . From my camp bed I can see flocks of brightly hued butterflies. They settle in clusters of about thirty or more, and flutter their wings in the sunlight. The effect is like a shallow bowl of bright flowers. I have seen many kinds new to me. There is one with the exact colouring and markings of a guinea-fowl—dull slate-grey, with white spots, and tan underwings. He is quaint, but not beautiful. The others, moths as well, are of gorgeous gold, scarlet, orange, and blue; there is a black one with bright mauve and blue spots, and there are some the colour of daffodils. I saw some bright orange dragonflies at the river. The birds, too, are gay—blue, orange, green, and red. There are green pigeons here.

"*Feb.* 28.—To-day we made a move again. It was such fun, and so exciting getting up at dawn, and starting off. There was a spice of adventure in it, after all our enforced delay. We did not go many miles, though, and here we are, stuck eight miles from Wankie. The thick

rope of the block and tackle has broken in three places, which shows what a lot of strain it has had to bear. We shall have to get a steel cable somewhere. We cannot get on at all without the block and tackle.

"*March* 1, *Sunday*.—I wonder what this month will bring us?

"Snakes are coming into their own just now. G. shot a large black mamba yesterday. Of course scorpions are legion!

"C.T. and Errol are busy getting the second car out of its slimy bed. Hope to get near to Wankie to-day."

CHAPTER VIII

WANKIE TO THE VICTORIA FALLS

WE reached Wankie on the 2nd of March. It was a relief to get there, and we felt after a few days that there was lots of spirit left in us yet, and were eager to get on again to see what the road would be like to the Victoria Falls. We had some days of sunshine, and it seemed possible that the roads would be drier, and that we had seen the tail-end of the rains.

Our stay was made very pleasant by the kind people in Wankie. We found it very strange to dine again at perfectly appointed tables, and we might have felt uncomfortable in our shabby bush kit had our hosts not been so delightfully friendly and understanding. It was such a decided change from the kind of life we had been living out in the rain and mud, where when we "dined" we sat on petrol tins with our plates on our laps.

We made our camp just outside the settlement, and it was a rendezvous for all the dogs and children in the place. I do not know which of them were the most curious, but they were all our very good friends. Wankie Coal Mine is interesting, chiefly because it is one of the richest coal mines in the world. Thousands of natives are employed at the mine, and it boasts a very good hospital, and a club for the European workers—the mine, the club, and the hospital form the little world of the white people living there. It was stunning to come straight out of the lonely bush on to this little hive of activity.

Before we reached Wankie Mr Glover had been bitten

by a poisonous fly, and had developed an abscess on his leg. It became so bad that he had to go into hospital, and we decided that we must wait there until he was better. He anticipated some good photography between Wankie and the Falls, so we all felt that the delay was worth while. We stayed there about ten days and rested. We were all of us very much below par in health, and it took longer for us to shake off any small ailment than it should have done.

Another bit of bad luck befell us when Errol broke his arm while cranking up one of the cars, and he also was consigned to hospital. The nursing sisters suggested that the hospital would have to be renamed "The Court Treatt Expedition Hospital," and expected another of us to be brought in at any minute. They were not disappointed, for Mr Law became an out-patient with veldt sores on his legs.

We had a good rest in Wankie, and on the morning of March 20 set off once more on our big trek, having had to leave Errol behind until his arm was well enough for travelling. After the fine weather we had had whilst resting it was dashing to our hopes to find that it began to rain again on the very day we left. The ground was hard in places, but the rest was soft, and we had to dig and drain as before. C.T. climbed in and out of the car all day, sitting at the wheel, or, when we stuck, showing us what he wanted done; and so we continued for weeks on our monotonous way.

During this time we saw, and shot, some game for the pot, and we saw lions' spoor often. We were bitten by all kinds of insects and were absolutely tormented at nights by millions of stinging gnats. They were such minute things to be able to sting so fiercely. Our mosquito-nets were quite inadequate, as they were easily able to get

through the fine mesh, being only about the size of pin-points. Our faces were a mass of spots in the mornings, in spite of our having slept, most uncomfortably, with large handkerchiefs over them. We had more fierce storms, and again experienced very severe lightning. We ran out of food, but had just enough to keep us going, with things like rice, porridge, and some tinned meat. We ran entirely out of cigarettes, and were overjoyed when a native runner came into camp with a big interesting parcel from Errol. The dear man had sent us some 'comforts,' among which were cigarettes and dates.

Julius had been told by me in Bulawayo to save a package of a hundred boxes of cigarettes and to hand them out only when we really needed them, because I knew that there would be many such times. One day when we had not a cigarette between us we approached Julius about them, but he said: "Solly, *Bibi*, cigarlettes finished." We simply could not believe it, and we all suspected each other of having got on the right side of Julius pretty often, but long afterward in the Sudan he produced the mildewed remains of those priceless cigarettes. He would bring out a couple of boxes at a time and tell us that he had 'found' them at the bottom of the chop-box. This happened so frequently toward the end of the journey that I was accused by every member of the expedition of being a cigarette hoarder, and they said they were quite sure that I used to go off by myself for quiet and uninterrupted smokes, gloating over the thought that they were reduced to smoking kaffir tobacco. I shall never live this down, and when I am a white-haired old lady I expect to find it still held up against me.

It was forest country up there, and we were forced to leave the soggy lower ground and go through the bush

on to higher ground. We chopped down at least a hundred trees a day, with the aid of natives. It is true that some of the trees were small, and sometimes of soft wood, but it meant continuous labour. Stumps had to be removed, and C.T. continually scouted out ahead to find a passable way. Mr Crewe, who owned a cattle ranch some miles ahead, passed us with his light buckboard and mules going into Wankie one day, and we were very anxious to reach his farm, where we knew a warm welcome awaited us. His wagon also passed us, going into Wankie for provisions, and we noticed some native ladies, tricked out in their best clothes, sitting inside the wagon, making jokes and treating their ox-wagon ride as a kind of holiday. Julius got into conversation with them, and they told him with much giggling that their husbands had 'lent' them to the drivers of the wagon for the price of ten shillings, to be spent at the store on *limbo*[1] for their husbands. The wagon stuck near our cars, and we got it out of the mud for them with our block and tackle, using their oxen as pulling power. It was a great strain on the wagon, and I am sure I heard something crack. I wonder if those husbands ever got their *limbo*?

The native men here had absurd stockinette undervests over their *limbo mouchas*.[2] They were really very dirty and literally dropping to pieces, sometimes with just the neck and a bit of sleeve left, and we saw one boy arrayed in an antiquated Victorian bonnet and a tight bodice with leg-of-mutton sleeves! His trousers were of riding pattern. Why do people persuade the natives to wear European clothes? A simple *moucha* is so much cleaner and more practical, I think. They were good souls, and worked well when watched, but like all natives they loved

[1] Calico.

[2] Loin-cloths.

to sit with their arms round their knees and heavily discuss matters before attacking them.

When the sun shone it was glorious to be alive. The birds were active; every mopani-tree glistened, and the air was crisp and sparkling. The sun was not in any way less powerful, but its light seemed paler and softer, and somehow suggestive of the pleasant African winter. The changes of season can be sensed more easily in Africa than in Europe. We felt on these days that it was so delicious to see and breathe and walk that it was worth all the disappointments we had had.

One of our camps was made very exciting by the near approach of our first elephants on this expedition. They came up within half a mile of the camp, making a great noise, crashing down trees as they came, and trumpeting loudly. It was a very dark night, and they went, rumbling and tramping, as suddenly as they had come, without our being able to catch a glimpse of them.

We made very little progress on our way, although we crept along slowly all the time. Sometimes we were able to have a grand washing-day, and get our clothes dry, or we went out, when we could, to get a buck for dinner. It was hard to get a fire going, because the wood was saturated. Everything was wet, and we seemed to droop ourselves. I felt as if I hadn't an idea in my head, and longed for new ones. I longed to play with some jolly children, and simply hungered for my little niece, Peggy, who was so far away in England. Then, when I felt that I was really getting a little bit insane, we arrived at Mr Robins' farm, which was half-way to Mr Crewe's ranch. It was known that Mr Robins was a recluse and extremely eccentric. We had been told that we must be careful not to annoy him, because his ten monstrous lion dogs might

get loose and eat us all up: also that the road running through his farm was the best in the country, but that if we dared to drive over it during the time the country was so sodden with rain we should all indubitably be eaten! We were so alarmed at the terrifying rumours we heard about Mr Robins' ferocity that C.T. thought it wise to write to him and ask his permission to go through his farm, saying that we should not, of course, use his private motor-road, as the rains had softened it and our heavy cars would probably plough it up. When we came to the borders of his place, half expecting to be refused permission to go through, we found a signboard with two notices. The one said: "Road to ——"; the other: "Private Motor Road"; and underneath this one was written: "The Court Treatt party may use this road if they wish, but they must mind the calves lying asleep on the road after they pass the cattle dip."

We duly 'minded' the calves, and reached the farm without doing them any harm. Here we met Mr Robins, surrounded by his dogs, and found a small person with a big white beard, and the most heavenly blue eyes I have ever seen. He held a big gold-topped malacca cane in one hand and a huge pipe in the other. I wanted to say: "Yes, I do believe in fairies!" He took us up to the house. It had a strong stockade round it, and there were four enormous Great Danes chained up inside. So these were the fearsome ones we had heard so much about! He took us up to them, and I must confess that, although I have loved and petted dogs all my life, I felt slightly nervous when I spoke to them, and put my hand forward to pat their heads. Of course I simply had to keep my end up and not allow the others to guess that I felt a bit weak at the knees: it would have given them a wonderful

opportunity of taunting me to the end of the journey. The huge ones were fairly friendly, but Mr Robins said that they could bring down and kill big game. Then we went into the *kia*. There was a table in the middle of the room, with a green tablecloth laid over it and some albums of marvellous game pictures, a photograph or two on the walls in pale wooden frames, a few chairs with priceless lion and leopard skins thrown over them, and by the window stood the biggest megaphone I have ever seen. He told us that he used it for calling the boys up. On a table near by was piled a mass of scientific journals and books of travel. We discovered that he was a highly educated man, who had done valuable scientific work in Central Africa, and that his life was a lonely one, spent with his dreams and books, his cattle and dogs. We fell in love with him, and he fascinated us with his wonderful belongings. He had telescopes and microscopes, cameras and an enlarging apparatus. Mr Glover said that it was the best enlarging apparatus he had ever seen, and the dark-room, with its shelves piled with chemicals, and a hundred other things interesting to photographers, caused him such excitement that he felt he would like to stay there and play for months. In one of the out-buildings Mr Robins had a perfectly equipped workshop, where he did his own carpentry and blacksmithing. He was an amazing man, and never ceased to interest us.

We stayed at Mr Robins' farm some days, while C.T. went off with Mr Glover (who was keen to get some game photographs, and a night picture of a lion, if possible) to a small salt-pan, some ten miles distant. They left in an ox-wagon, with the camera kit, some food, and their beds and mosquito-nets.

"*April* 4.—After C.T. and G. left, Fred and I took the

rod and strode off to the Dekka river to fish. It was terrific fun—the river is full of fish, and we got three bream and a large barbel within five minutes of casting. Mr Robins says that we may shoot on the farm on condition that we don't bag a young cow! We took our rifles, but did not see anything. I loathe shooting really. It seems so heartless, but even Mr Robins has no meat.

"*April* 5.—Glorious day, with a few clouds romping about—but they may not mean more rain.

"*Next day.*—A rainy day. I wonder how the poor souls are getting on at the pan. We sent some food and milk down to them. I heard a leopard close by during the night. It is quaint being alone and hearing wild beasts prowling about. I am mending Fred's shirt, and he is reading out to me something about Marcia, the poor girl he is dragging about Africa in a story he is writing. I made him stop while I wrote this. 'Right—let her go, Fred.'

". . . We got word from C.T. saying that they are returning to-day. They are having no luck, and it rains incessantly. We dined in the tent last night, and when I asked Mr Robins why he was not eating he casually informed me that he had just had a large plate of porridge before coming down. He is most erratic in his meals, and eats at any old time, usually at 4 A.M. He needs a mother.

"*Later.*—Two villainous-looking people trekked in at six o'clock, looking for all the world like Bill Sikes' brothers, if he had any, with stubbly chins and muddy clothes. They came back riding in their ox-wagon, and yelling at the beasts as to the manner born. They seemed a bit hurt when I told them they were disgusting sights. C.T. said that it was G.'s suggestion that they did not

shave, but G. stoutly denied the accusation, and assured me that C.T.'s memory was not what it used to be, that really it was he who had said: 'It is jolly nice not having a woman to bother us about our beards—let's let them grow!' Anyway, they are back, and, beards and all, we are pleased to see them. There is an old nig here whom we call Mafuta, because it means 'Fat One,' who always begs for a cigarette and a tune on the gramophone; we invariably give him both because he is a jolly old thing with a fat tummy, which he pats at intervals.

". . . Last night Fred and I strolled with rifles to the river, and hoped, and secretly feared, that we might see lions. It was the most weird sensation walking along the path, with thick bush on either side, and knowing that it was quite possible to come face to face with a lion or something. We heard a leopard cough close by, but did not see him. Night-jars flew up at our feet, and things scuttled away into the bush. The river was in a ravine, with thick bush and trees growing on the banks, and the moonlight made the bushes assume extraordinary shapes. We thought we might see 'things' drinking. I agreed that I should love to see lions, but secretly hugged my rifle tightly, hoping that I shouldn't. I had creepy feelings up and down my spine, and on the way back there were moments when I almost ran. My field-boots were wet through with the dew when we got back, and my one-and-only skirt, too; but they tell us that dew is a good sign, because it means the end of the rains.

"We leave for Mr Crewe's to-morrow, and I am to have the delight of riding there on horseback. I always long for horses, and spent most of my young life on their backs.

". . . Three lions tried their hardest to get into

Mr Robins' cattle kraal last night. He always keeps a native or two on guard by the kraals. Last night, when they heard a noise, they banged off their ancient gunnery and frightened the lions off. The niggers in the kitchen *kia* have some old meat, which simply howls to the skies. I shall have to do something about the matter. I wonder why the flavour of particularly bad meat appeals to them so strongly. I have just heard that a lion got a cow at another of Mr Robins' kraals. Almost all that was left of the poor beast was the tail and a few bones. If I had known that the lions were going to be so active I might not have risked going down to the river last night!"

We felt sorry to say good-bye to our friend, Mr Robins, but we had to push on. We could not afford more time. The rains had been pretty bad, but there had been days when we had a good drying sun, and although the road was soggy it was not so bad as the Bulawayo-to-Wankie bit had been.

The cars crossed the Dekka river fairly easily, and I left them there and rode the horse lent me on to Mr Crewe's place. It was a gorgeous ride. The road led through hills and streams, and I saw game occasionally, and some birds with gay feathers. Later that evening C.T. and the others arrived. The mud was very heavy the last five miles to the farm, and C.T. had to leave the cars, and come on and ask Mr Crewe to lend his oxen to drag them out and up to the house.

The men all looked very tired, and had been up to their knees in mud. They were given drinks which revived them, and we spent a happy evening listening to stories told by our host, and contributing some of our own. Jolly little guest huts had been prepared for us—as a matter of

fact, they had been ready for us for days. It was the most delicious thing in the world sleeping on springy beds between sheets once again, and it was hard to tear ourselves out of them the next morning, but the marvellous breakfast we had made up for the effort. It included lots of ham and eggs, fruit and cream, and I know I, for one, did full justice to it. At that time we had the idea that heaven must be paved with ham and eggs!

The others went down with C.T., and he took some oxen, and got both the cars back in the evening. It was a hard struggle getting them out of the mud. It was of the tough, sticky variety, and there was lots of it.

We had news of Errol that day; he had sent a runner all the way from Wankie with some cigarettes and a few other things he thought we might need.

We spent two days with Mr Crewe, while C.T. did some work on the cars, and then we started off on the road again. We had to use oxen once more to get us out of three *dambos* between Mr Crewe's farm and that of Mr Cumming, whose place was our next objective. Of the nine miles we travelled between the two farms about four were muddy *dambos* about a foot deep. Mr Crewe's oxen helped us through half the distance, then Mr Cumming's span carried on the good work. We shall never forget the help and sympathy we received from every one in Rhodesia. They simply helped us wherever they could in what must have seemed a mad undertaking, during that appalling period of rain and mud.

Mr Brownlee Cumming and his two brothers are well-known big-game hunters. They have accounted for a lot of lions in Rhodesia. They come of an old pioneering family, and are related to the celebrated hunter, Gordon Cumming. They are all three reliable and modest men,

ERROL MAKING A DEAL IN CHICKENS

and the simple courtesy we received from them will always remain a pleasant memory to us.

We stayed at the home of Mr Brownlee Cumming, who simply exuded kindliness and hospitality. He made us feel that he really loved having us as his guests, and would not hear of our camping, as we had proposed doing, while C.T. went off on a three days' trek to a place called Matetsi, where we had a dump of petrol awaiting us.

C.T. departed, perched on the box-seat of a wagon drawn by sixteen oxen. We laughed at him, sitting there waving a whip, and trying to imitate the guttural noises the native boys howled at the oxen to speed them up. A wagon was sent by Mr Cumming twice a month to Matetsi, for the purpose of taking farm produce to the railway to be sent down to the nearest market. He told us that the natives considered the Matetsi wagon a kind of transport service run especially for their convenience, and sometimes there would be no less than a dozen native ladies, all dressed up in their best clothes, each with a big black cotton umbrella held over her head, sitting in the body of the wagon, thoroughly enjoying the prospect of a ride, and feeling very smart and beautiful with her brightest handkerchief bound round her head.

Mr Cumming allowed us to do exactly what we liked. It was so restful to know that I could stay in a comfortable bed as long as I wanted to, and not have the awful fear that I might be a minute late and hear every one say: "You're hanging up the show!" This was a camp joke, really, for in the beginning of our trip they all lay in wait for me, trying to catch me out in being the last to be ready. But I should like to say here that I defy any of them to prove that I delayed the start more than once; for that occasion I paid dearly, and was tormented about it for

months. The men could dress in three minutes, and so could I have done if I had not enjoyed my sponge bath at 4 A.M. a little better than they did!

At Mr Cumming's place my breakfast was brought to me, and I loved best of all the porridge made of newly ground mealies. I had great joy in taking lots of cream and sugar with it, and it was also a great luxury for us to have some of the fruit grown on his farm, for we had done without fruit for such a long time that the taste of it again came almost as a surprise.

The rooms of the house were cool and quiet, the roof was of thatch, as most of the Rhodesian roofs are, and the atmosphere of the whole place did me good. It was simple and restful, and I had not felt very well for some weeks before. The rains had persisted so long that our systems had become very run down. We needed sunshine to cure our cuts and poisonous bites, and we got it there. It still rained, but the sun did come out strongly for hours at a time, and we relaxed our tired limbs in its warmth.

I pitied my poor C.T. having to plough his way through the mud-logged road to Matetsi. We had been told that it meant digging more than travelling on the Matetsi road.

Mr Cumming's younger brother lived at a neighbouring farm with his parents, and the elder brother, too, had his own farm. It was he who once had a very unpleasant experience. Lions had been troubling, and Mr Cumming left his house with a Dutchman and a native boy to hunt them down. After having walked some miles they came upon a lion, and Mr Cumming fired for a heart-shot; but hit a little too far back. The lion charged, and Mr Cumming gave it another shot, which passed through the fleshy part of the shoulder. The lion still came on, then

raised itself and placed its two fore-paws on Mr Cumming's shoulder. Instinctively the unfortunate man shielded his face and the lion bit the defending arm. With the pain of this, and the weight of the lion, he fell to the ground, whereupon the beast left him, and, badly wounded, lay a few yards off. Mr Cumming shouted to his two companions to shoot. This aroused the beast afresh, and it came again for the half-fainting man. As it dashed forward he feebly attempted to ward off the infuriated brute, but the huge jaws opened and enveloped his foot up to the ankle, biting through sinew and bone. The more he fought the harder the lion gnawed. At this moment his native boy, having plucked up courage, dashed up and gave the lion a fatal shot. Afterwards Mr Cumming, with the help of his companions, staggered home, and for days lay between life and death, gangrene having set in. For months he could not place his foot to the ground, and although a year or two had passed he was still quite lame when we met him, and the leg was far from normal. The wound occasionally reopened and gave him great pain. He walked with a perceptible limp, and his hand was stiff.

This is only one of the many experiences our hosts had with lions. Mr Brownlee Cumming once had to defend his life with a hammer-action rifle, which at the critical moment would not work. He aimed, and pushed the hammer down with his finger, and got his lion! I think this required magnificent presence of mind and nerve. I hate to think what would happen to me in similar circumstances.

We had some jolly rides while we stayed at the farm. Mr Cumming had just acquired a spirited little pony, which was hardly broken in to the saddle. I was entreated not to ride him, but Mr Cumming told Mr Law that he

might do so if he insisted upon risking his neck! So one fine morning we all set out for a nine-mile ride, our host, G. and I on amused-looking mules, and Fred on his prancing and naughty little pony. That ride was a kind of wild-west affair. We could not travel on the road all the way because it was under water, so our chargers tore unconcernedly through the bush and over ant-bear holes. G.'s old beast insisted on going where his spirit led him, and we had glimpses of G. flashing across our path to left or right like a kind of rocket, trying to hold in his mule and get him to see reason. These flashes were so sudden and startling that Fred's magnificent beast would rear up on his hind-legs and do his best to unseat him every time. Still we carried on, ducking our heads every few yards to avoid the trees. When we got on to a level stretch of road our beasts became almost manageable, until, amid a burst of laughter, I put out my hand rather suddenly to take a cigarette from Fred. This started them off again, and Fred's horse sprang away and did some amazing buck-jumping, and my mule, all worked up with devilment at the sight of the frisky horse, bolted into the bush with me, and all my efforts to hold him in were of no avail—he just went madly on.

I had looked quaint in Fred's khaki slacks when we set out, but I know I must have looked an amazing sight when I got my mule back to the others. I think I got most of my garments torn on the thorn bushes, to say nothing of my hands and face. But I beat that steed of mine and got him back, and I had breath enough left to laugh with the others when it was all over. We presented such a funny sight in our miscellaneous garb that we set up a Brownie camera, and let Julius 'snap' us when we got back to the farm.

FACING THE EASTERN CATARACT, HALF-WAY DOWN

We left Mr Cumming's place on the 20th of April, and we were very sorry to say good-bye to him. C.T. said that the road to Matetsi was nothing more than a bog, and that if the road to the Victoria Falls was anything like it we should not get there under three weeks. We found that the rivers were going down, and that the rain had almost stopped; but the ground was still very heavy, especially where the rivers had overflowed their banks, and we had to cross many bogs fifty to a hundred yards wide. We were helped along the way by various farmers with their oxen. In parts the road was good, and we were able to 'romp' along at fifteen miles an hour, and we made better progress than we had expected.

We pushed on as hard as we could go. The bush was very thick, and one day we came to a little clearing by a small river, and saw in the distance, about thirty miles off, what looked like a large cumulus cloud, only it remained in one place, and did not change its shape. Then we heard a faint roar, like the stamp of a big power-station in the distance, and C.T. cried: "The Falls!—it is the Falls!"

Our spirits bounded up, and we all shouted "Hurrah!" It was almost too good to be true to know that at last, after our long struggle in mud and rain, we were actually within a few hours' journey of them. Cairo was too far away; we could not visualize it. But the Falls—here were the Falls, and we were thankful. We had to think of our journey in stages, and the Victoria Falls was our next goal.

We trekked on after dark, hoping to get there that night, but the bush became thicker and thicker, the grass up to the roofs of the cars, and we could see nothing ahead. So we were forced to halt and make camp. We were

bitterly disappointed; our eagerness to reach the Falls was almost too much to bear, but we consoled ourselves by getting out the least torn and mildewed of our kit and preparing ourselves for the great event on the morrow. We cleaned the mud off our shoes, and I mended some clothes. The last night before reaching the comparative civilization of the Falls was spent under a tarpaulin, with rain running in on to our beds, but it was the last of that appalling period of unceasing rain, and our luck was not so dead against us as it had been.

CHAPTER IX

LIVINGSTONE TO BROKEN HILL

THE Falls! We were entranced by the beauty and magnitude of them. The abnormal rains had one good side to them in that they had flooded the Zambesi and increased the volume of water enormously, so that the Falls at that time, April 1925, were more magnificent and stupendous than can be conceived. The spray billowed in great clouds over the tremendous gorges and drenched us to the skin as we watched. The wind wafted it away for a few moments, and we saw glimpses of the maddened flow of water crashing over the high cliffs. We walked about a mile on the Livingstone side to see the Eastern Cataract, and here the roar and rush of the water was so great that, even had we wished to speak, our voices would have been deadened. We looked into the depths below, and, seeing the whirling waters, we said that we should like to make the descent to the bottom of the gorge, and see them from that angle, but I had a feeling that the terrible churning water down there must catch and draw us into its frenzied rush; and yet, although I was sickened at the thought, I was fascinated and drawn by it, and I knew that I must attempt to go down some time.

C.T. had got permission to drive the cars across the railway bridge. It is the only bridge over the Zambesi at the Victoria Falls, but no vehicles except trains were allowed to use it. In consideration of ours being expedition cars, however, we were granted permission to drive them

over, but they were to be treated as a train, and the station-master was instructed by the Rhodesian Railways to act as a guard. On the day of the crossing he arrived, to our amusement, complete with peaked hat, whistle, and green flag. He handed C.T. his papers, and off we went. We crossed the bridge slowly, bumping over the sleepers, and were vigorously photographed by tourists, in their white helmets and sun goggles. We got across safely and camped on the north side, a few miles from the hotel. Our arrival at the Falls was made doubly pleasant by the fact of Errol's meeting us there, he having caught us up after leaving the hospital in Wankie. He dashed up, looking very fit and brown, and rather civilized, in new shirt and shorts, finished off with a splendid tie. We had missed him terribly, and the two weeks he had been away seemed like years. He had worked so hard during the rains, and his cheery old grin never failed us once, so that it was no wonder we felt we could not do without him. His arm had set and was as strong as ever, and he was keen to get back into harness again.

We dined at the hotel in the evening, and I was made to realize what a savage I had become when I ordered sweets, after I had had dessert consisting of luscious grapes which simply could not be resisted. The waiter asked me to repeat my order, and when I did so raised his eyebrows and said: "Pudding comes before dessert, madam!"

That evening, our first at the Falls, the clouds were orange- and lemon-coloured just before sunset, and the shafts of sunlight made bright rainbows in the big gorge, where the spray floated over wet trees and glistening ferns. It was beautiful and awe-inspiring, the roar maddening; in my mind I saw pictures of it in its fierce beauty, as it

had been before the white man came, with only the wild things of the forest living there, and the black savage, who must have held it a place of superstition and magic. I saw elephants, lions, and leopards, framed in a setting as wild and untamed as they.

Now, there were only little grey apes, dashing about from tree to tree, and big baboons bounding over rocks, some with their babies on their backs, or tightly clutched to their breasts. Birds flew in and out of the rainbows below, and we felt that the wretched time we had come through was well rewarded by these visions of beauty.

Our camp was right away from the noisy hotel, tucked away in the bush, a few yards from the Eastern Cataract. By the light of the full moon we saw lunar rainbows flung in great arches over the water, and slanting deep down into the gulf. There were strange sudden noises in the night; a bird would flutter by, uttering a single note, a baboon bark in the distance, or a jackal cry; then again silence, but for the unchanging roar of the Falls.

We had an irresistible impulse to lean out as far as we could over the precipice, trying to fathom the swirling depths below, steadying ourselves by holding on to the branch of a tree, each of us feeling secure enough, but terrified at seeing another do it.

The beauty of those shining nights, the vastness, the silence, and the roar, roused in us indescribable, tangled emotions: memories of things we had thought were forgotten, half-formed dreams of things we had hoped for, unsuspected feelings that had never found voices—these all rose and clamoured for expression. Words were inadequate—would have seemed almost a sacrilege.

We longed for great music, the only human expression which could come near to meeting our need. Our little gramophone did its banal best, and played for us the wild Russian music of Mussorgski and Stravinski, and the deep-toned songs of Chaliapin, but there was much emotion in us left without a vent.

This explains why, perhaps, when we woke in the mornings to the bright sunshine and the indescribable smell of clean wet earth, we descended from the sublime to the ridiculous and disported ourselves like children bubbling over with fun. The tourists presented themselves as heaven-sent targets at which to aim our mischievous shafts. They insisted upon prowling round the camp, and annoyed us intensely by looking all wrong, in that setting, with their immaculate white helmets and large bone-rimmed goggles. Many of them were most unsuitably dressed and we were particularly infuriated by one lady we met, who had set out to follow the rough path which leads down to Palm Grove. She was dressed in the height of fashion, with high-heeled white kid shoes, and carried a lace parasol. In less than ten minutes we saw her returning, routed by a mud-hole into which she had fallen, her beautiful kid shoes ruined for ever.

Once we strolled off and started a hoax in which Fred was to take the part of a stern tourist papa, and we his somewhat out-of-hand offspring. Our play had reached a hilarious climax when we espied, coming round a bend, a small party of bespectacled and serious-looking people. We decided upon the instant that their legs needed pulling, and G. hit upon the idea of careering madly past them, burbling something about leopards. Fred was to call us back and say: "No, no, not leopards—black mambas!"

A HAPPY MEAL

Our part of the game worked out all right, for the tourists seemed very disturbed as we dashed past, but on looking back we could see no sign of Fred. Our joy was complete when the serious ones made a rapid return along the path, protesting as they went: "But, *dear*, surely there is nothing in the guide-book about wild animals here?"

When we next encountered Fred he excused his desertion by saying that his sense of propriety would not allow him to indulge in such antics. Later we heard him affirming to some people in the hotel that the constant roar of the Falls had caused us to become a trifle unbalanced, and he could take no responsibility for our conduct.

One day we determined to be tourists ourselves for a change, and to do things in the correct style, with the others. We took a boat across the Zambesi to the other side, where there were cars waiting to take us into Livingstone. Here, in the true tourist way, we bought many things we should never need, native baskets, skins, ivory bangles and curios, and then went back to where a smart launch waited to take us up the river. The launch stopped at the pleasant little islands dotted about in the river, and on one we found a very proper tea, laid ready on long, long tables. Before we left we did the usual thing in cutting off a cluster of 'love-beans'—small red beans tipped with black. There were very few left, for preceding hordes of tourists had collected most of them, and even their trees had a tourist-tired appearance. To be absolutely correct, we should also have collected some 'Victoria lucky beans,' but of these we saw no sign, not even of the trees which bear them. The tourists had perhaps uprooted even these in their enthusiasm.

There were some little grey monkeys, belonging to the

custodian of the boat-house, with which we used to play. They were very tame, and I longed to have a monkey of my own. It was a jolly surprise some days later when two adorable tiny mites were presented to me by a man who had been collecting wild animals for Hagenbeck. They had only just been caught, and looked so minute and frightened in their cage. I took them out and gave them a bath, which they did not seem to mind much, and they looked most attractive afterward, with their soft grey hair fluffed out. Their little faces were black, and their tummies and chests powder-blue. I called one 'Kima' and the other 'Bibi,' and they became tame very quickly. I noticed that they liked warmth, which is probably the reason they bore their baths so well. Like all monkeys, they never ceased to nibble at anything that came their way.

Kima was the stronger, and rather browbeat Bibi, who was a delicate little soul, and felt that she was misunderstood by the world. She was devoted to Kima, and he to her—with reservations, for he never allowed her to interfere with his amusements, and at the slightest sign of insubordination on her part would severely bite her tail. We were very amused one day when the pair of them were sitting on a log in front of the camp fire. Bibi said something that irritated Kima, and he bit what he thought was her tail, only to find that he had made a small miscalculation and bitten his own instead. He was furious, and there ensued a battle-royal, in which poor Bibi got the worst as usual. I loved her, but Kima, though an undeserving rascal, was always the more attractive.

We made them a combination house-and-bath out of a petrol tin. C.T. cut out one side and soldered down the rough edges. They would cuddle up in it while we

KIMA AND BIBI

travelled, and if Bibi dared to crawl out when Kima wished to remain in we heard awful kickings and squealings inside the petrol-tin house while he chastised her, and then cuddled her up with his arms right round her, making little crooning noises. Afterward, when things got monotonous or bad, the little monkeys were an unending joy to us, they did such funny things and struck funnier attitudes.

There are three outstanding memories of the Falls in my mind: one is the Eastern Cataract, seen from Danger Point; the next is the Rain Forest; and the third is the climb we made down to the bottom of the gorge by the Main Falls.

The Eastern Cataract seen from Danger Point, as we saw it, in full flood, is surely one of the grandest sights of the world. To reach Danger Point you must go through the Rain Forest. We put on ground-sheets over our shirts and shorts and padded off in our veldtschoen down to see this, the most gorgeous sight of the whole place.

The Rain Forest is aptly named. It borders the opposite cliffs of the Main Falls, and the spray from them comes over and down unceasingly into the forest, like rain. It is fairyland in here on a sunny day, when the sun glints in between the fronds of giant ferns and trees whose branches drip off crystal drops of rain. At your feet are little rainbows, making streamers of colour in and out of the leaves and soft fern beds. I had always wished to stand at the foot of a rainbow, and here was my fantasy become reality. Rainbows seemed to chase us and pause, shimmering with laughter, when we stood still. It was warm in the shining forest; the rain fell in warm drops, and wet birds shrilled to each other as they

darted and fluttered about. The Rain Forest belongs to the fairies.

There is an abrupt contrast when you step out from the trees on to the edge of the precipice facing the Falls. Here Nature presents the wildest and fiercest scene; the rocks are shiny and slippery, the roaring Falls opposite are almost agonizing in their effect on your senses. You stand on the farthest projecting ledge of rock, while the spray-rain beats and lashes your body unmercifully, the wind howls through the gap in the cliffs and tears at your feet in its frenzied efforts to hurl you headlong into the depths below. You glory in the wildness, the madness of it; you throw your arms up and shout, facing the slashing wind and rain, you become part of it: here a soul may awaken to the meaning of itself, and know if never before the heights and depths of elemental things.

The descent was the result of a 'dare.' I was told that I could not possibly do it, that it was only safe for a man to attempt; but as I guessed that my courage was being tested I said: "Come, let us go down." I must confess that my heart beat sickeningly in my throat as we clutched at crumbling stones and great rocks, where there was very little foothold. My companion went first and steadied me as I jumped down, after hanging on to the branch of a tree, or slithering down a shiny rock. Once a dislodged stone as big as a water-melon tumbled down on to my foot; it hurt terribly for a while, but I was determined to descend. We slipped, and fell; we got up, and slipped again; we clung to bushes and rocks. I knew that getting up again would be harder than coming down, and I had visions of staying down there in the cold, wet gulf until the others came with a rope to find us. Our voices were

EASTERN CATARACT, VICTORIA FALLS

drowned, and we had to shout into each other's ears to make ourselves heard. The Falls, tumbling and crashing down—almost upon us—made my bones turn to jelly, and I trembled with excitement.

We sat there in that cold darkness until we could bear it no longer, then we started to go back along the way we had come. I do not know how we made the ascent. Somehow I scrambled up, first from the shoulders of my companion, then giving my hand to him until he had got up. We slipped, and caught hold of tree trunks, vines and branches, we dug our fingers into the ground, while our feet sought a foothold, loose earth showering upon us, and stones falling behind us. We stopped half-way to rest, but I dared not look back, lest I should become too dizzy to go on. The roar of the water almost paralysed me, and I felt myself grow weak and trembly. Eventually we reached the top in safety, and solemnly shook hands. That climb cemented a very good friendship and I was never again teased about my courage.

"*May* 5.—Stayed in camp all morning. Walked round in the afternoon. The Falls are more and more wonderful from each new angle. G. and I went to the Rain Forest. This I consider the most impressive and gorgeous place of all, where the rain smites and buffets your face and body, and the Falls roar in front of you and look magnificent. We walked right out on to the farthest ledge of rock and gloried in the fury of it. A most dangerous spot, for the rocks are slippery.

"*May* 6.—C.T. and I drove into Livingstone by car, and he had to take his shoes, socks and best pants off in the middle of a river to crank the car up. It was a quaint sight. I left him in Livingstone at 4 P.M., as he had to get

the gear-box fixed on the car. Having met Fred and G., some time during the afternoon, we three came back to camp together. We caught the mail train just as she was steaming out of the station and a moment before the old thing got to the bridge we jumped off. It was going pretty slowly though. This saved us from going a couple of miles to the station and then back to camp, which is on this side of the river—eastern side. The station and hotel are on the western side. We have met some old friends at the hotel, and shall meet them for a rag to-morrow night or Friday.

"*May* 7.—C.T. didn't get back until four o'clock this afternoon. Errol has been working hard at No. 1 car. Good old kid. G., Errol, and I walked to the boat-house on the other side, round the bend of the Devil's Cataract, to see Mr Parre's monkeys. We had a riotous game with them, and then strolled back in the moonlight and saw the Falls again, by the bright light of the moon. We saw lunar rainbows, great arches of coloured light, right across the great gorge. Got back, had dinner, and then C.T. and I went off once again to look at the place. It seems to draw you always. You never get tired.

"*May* 8.—Cold last night. This is a good sign. Perhaps the rain will keep off. We leave on Tuesday. Did wonderful climb with G. down face of cliff. Never done anything so stiff and thrilling in my life. It is a heaven's own day. The Falls tumble and glisten in the sunlight, and the birds have gone mad.

"*May* 9.—We went to Livingstone early this morning and saw the parade. Askari soldiers are wonders. They are so correct and smart in their khaki uniforms—tunics, belts, and shorts, and black fezes with tassels. Some of the Askaris had chests full of medals, and the native

BY THE FALLS

band is wonderful. The parade ground is like a park. We met the Colonel's lady and others, and drove from there to have tea with the Governor and Lady Stanley. Big bright moon to-night. The Falls look too magnificent for my poor words to express. Feeling eager to get on again.

"*May* 10, *Sunday*.—Fine wintry day. I feel awful. Fever in my system, I suppose. Fred has bad sore throat. Had masses of visitors at eleven o'clock all wanting to know all about everything—trying. Errol and C.T. are busy working at cars—there is such a lot to be done before we can move, I doubt whether we shall be able to go on Tuesday.

"*May* 11.—Feel rather wobbly—am writing this in bed. Fred is typing his dispatch at the table here in the tent. Freezing night. G. is sitting in here too reading. C.T. and Errol have gone off to the hotel to see a lad there whom C.T. knows.

"*May* 12.—Can't go to-day—not a chance for a week, I am sure. C.T. says Thursday or Saturday, but I have grave doubts. The poor things have so much to do. Heaps of odd jobs on the cars and flashlight apparatus. I feel better to-day. The hot toddy and quinine last night did the trick. The moonlight has been gorgeous. It is a pity the moon is waning now. This is rather a disturbing place; it makes you think wildly and feel worse. How big and above all petty things is this colossal mass of tumbling water. The cliffs are so high that one feels, when looking down into the depths below, how puny and ineffective we are. The big bridge here, made by the clever hands of man, looks merely absurd and trivial in this tremendous and wonderful place.

"*May* 15.—C.T. decides that the valves need grinding down. This means more delay.

"*May* 16.—Work goes on all the while. There seems to be so much to be done. I go for walks every day. Have done some exciting climbing. G. has been getting cine-pictures of the Falls.

"*May* 18.—An amazing thing happened to-day. My wish has come true. Not only one monkey, but two were given me by a Hagenbeck collector of big game. They are mere babes, the sweetest little blue-and-grey angels in the world. C.T. and I put them into neat little tummy-bands and chains and fastened them on to a tree beside the tent. They have a box with straw in it, and are as happy as kings. They sat in the sand and gloated over the fruit and nuts we gave them.

"*May* 19.—My little monkeys thrive and are having the time of their young lives. To-day I bathed them. C.T. and G. helped by holding them while I soaped and sponged. They were very good, and struggled only a tiny bit. In fact, I believe they enjoyed the warmth of the water. I dried them quite easily and powdered their fascinating powder-blue tummies with violet talcum! They looked too adorable—all fluffed out and immaculate—sitting on their box eating the dragon-flies we brought them.

"We are a source of annoyance to the native boys in charge of the little trolleys which, on the small-gauge railway, run down from sheds at the hotel to within a short distance of the bridge. At midnight, when the last sandwich and iced lemonade have found their destination, we, in search of home, go down to the sheds, and naturally bag one of the trolleys standing there idle just asking to be used. We board one, and race down the line at a joyously mad speed. But the boys hate the fag of padding up behind, and pushing the trolley back to the hotel in the

morning before the first batch of tourists can be taken down to see the Falls.

"Last night we were amazed to find, when we came to fetch a trolley, that every single one was missing out of the shed. Somebody said: 'Dirty work here. Only one thing to do, of course—scout round. They can't have carried the things away.' We scouted round, and horrid sounds issued from various quarters, as the members of the band fell into thorn bushes or tripped over rocks, but one of the stout fellahs located them round a bend, neatly parked off the line, by the side of the track. So we bagged two, to 'l'arn 'em,' and refused to be done out of a good run. We pushed them up to the starting-off place and Errol and Fred won the toss, and each took a brake-handle of a trolley, with us as passengers. To say that the race was exciting is to make it sound like bread-and-butter. Errol was in front, howling derision, and I heard G. spurring him on with horrid yells. C.T. and I behind, with Fred, hurled insults at the leading trolley, careering blindly on, round curves, and down steep slopes. Why we 'raced' each other on a single-track railway must for ever remain a mystery, but G. and Errol won. They slapped up dead at the terminus on a big sand dump, and we narrowly escaped being hurled to glory, as Fred banged on his brake an inch short of the first trolley."

Livingstone was not all play and sightseeing. Each of us had his work to do. Errol gave the cars the thorough overhauling which was necessary, after the terrible strains imposed on them during the rains, and, with C.T., tested the engines and found nothing wrong. Julius, our faithful old servant, did everything, from helping with the mechanism of the cars down to cooking the food, and

Mr Glover ran riot with his cameras, and got what are said to be the best cinematograph pictures of the Falls ever taken. Mr Law wrote dispatches, while C.T. and I, as his second-in-command, planned ways and means for the next stretch. We were invited to dine at Government House, and there the Governor, Sir Arthur Stanley, told us that there were no proper roads ahead of Livingstone. There was an old road to the west of the railway line which had been used by wagons in the old transport days before the railways came, and a survey had also been made for a road to the east; but this new road had not yet been started, and although on the whole it was hard ground, there were several very bad *dambos* that would have to be crossed. We were told that the sand was impossible to negotiate without oxen, that lots of people had tried it, and stuck hopelessly and had to be pulled back again, and there was great difficulty in finding a guide. But by this time we had had enough of mud and swamps, and C.T. decided to try the old sandy road.

He had to arrange about shooting licences, since in Northern Rhodesia we should have to live very largely on what we shot, and also about the picking up of money. He arranged to draw upon one official farther north to the sum of one hundred and ninety pounds. This sum was to be paid in paper money, and a certain part—for paying the natives—in 'tikkies' (threepenny bits). To his horror, when we arrived at this station, the whole amount was dished out in half-crowns. It nearly required another car to carry the weight, and of course a half-crown as a means of paying hundreds of natives is practically useless anyway. It would be too extravagant, and we were reminded of the story current in this district of the Scotsman who had to pay his boys

ERROL AND JULIUS AT WORK

half-a-crown a month, and who one month paid them in florins instead. To this day the natives call a florin a 'scottisman.'

C.T. met many old friends in Livingstone, and was much looking forward to meeting others as we went up country. He heard, too, that many of the old native chiefs who knew him were still living, and arranged to have word sent forward to them that he was coming along again.

"*May* 20.—To-day is an extra busy day. There is a terrific din of knockings and hammerings going on, and every one is dashing about looking very preoccupied. For to-morrow we begin our 'big push,' and one of the most interesting stretches of the journey. So now, old Diary, hold your thumbs. Everything has to be repacked and generally fixed, and the boys for three days have been getting the washing done. All the cartridges have been packed in sealed toffee tins to keep the damp out. The cars are running like gems! C.T. and Errol have worked like Trojans at them. The blue-tummied babies thrive. I am rather bucked with myself. G. threw a tin into the Zambesi, just above the Falls, and said: 'Shoot!' It was about thirty yards and going at a dickens of a rate, but I got it plonk! So a charging beastie had better look out!

"*May* 21.—We have done 17·9 miles to-day. Jolly good going over awful road. The soft sand we were told about is something like a foot deep in places. We got two punctures this evening just before leaving. Both cars got sharp stumps jabbed through their tyres. We have a lovely camp, and are sitting round an enormous fire. The monkeys are here too, looking positively eatable. To-night we do not unpack the car, and will sleep under a

'bivvy.' We are dog-tired, after getting the cars out of the heavy sand all day long.

". . . Did fifteen miles. The monkeys had a grand time, perched up on my lap, grabbing bunches of red fruit as the car brushed past the laden trees. Bibi deliberately kissed me to-day. Kima is older and more reckless, and does not believe much in sentiment. They are quite inseparable, and dash at each other as soon as the car starts, cuddle up close, and make little chuckey noises when they want anything to eat.

". . . Had a fairly good day yesterday. The road was a fire-path, from which we branched off on to a bush track. Not good going, but we are moving, and that is something. Last night before camping we had a hair-raising experience, when we had to leave the fire-path or go into an impassable swamp. The only alternative was to travel on the railway line itself. The slope alongside the rails was just wide enough for us to travel along, exceedingly carefully. We got on to it, and stuck fast. Then we heard the whistle of a train! We could not move, and we did not know whether the train would miss us, as the space between the car and the rails was very little. We thought that it might be all right, if only the train had no trucks with projecting logs on her. On she came, and it seemed that the next moment we should all be swept to glory. Then, after æons, she passed, and we were safe. We had to remain on the sloping edge for two and a half hours, while we built platforms of logs to bolster up the car. It was exciting when C.T. and I got in and backed and pushed forward, trying to wriggle on to the logs, with the thought of a goods train coming along at any moment. I prefer to stay in the car with C.T. when I think he may be killed. I am afraid of being a coward.

You know, old Diary, the feeling one has about these things!

"We eventually managed to scramble along, and after about a hundred yards we reached a place where we could get the cars off the slope on to hard ground, and here we are, camped in the veldt by the side of the line. With our fires and lights we startled the engine-drivers of the trains as they came by. They naturally thought that some lunatic had camped and lit a fire on the line. When they slowed up, and found out who we were, they one and all yelled: 'Good old Cape-to-Cairo! Good luck!'

"*Next day.*—We have been travelling in very 'liony' country between Makoli and Zimba. The natives at the last camp told us that three lions had been along the railway line the night before. Here, at a native kraal, the old head-man says they have been sniffing round their huts every night lately and have taken a child. To-night we all camped in an awful *vlei*. It looks liony enough for anybody. We shall have a job getting out of here to-morrow."

The Mashakalumbwe (a nickname given to the Ba-ila people in the country south of the Zambesi) are a very fierce and reserved race, greatly feared by the other tribes. Their physique is magnificent; they are tall, square-shouldered, and fine featured. The undue development of their lower limbs makes them akin to the Dinkas in appearance. They have a ferocious aspect in their war dress, the chiefs wearing lion and leopard skins, the warriors ruffs of wildebeest manes, and tufts of hair circling their arms, and all carrying huge spears, sometimes twelve feet long.

In the old days their wealth in herds was proverbially great, and they were constantly raided by the Matabele,

and then by the Barotse peoples. They were a small tribe, and through having always to be on the defensive, for themselves and their cattle, they grew more and more fierce, until the surrounding tribes went in lively fear of them. While elephant-hunting, about 1853, my grandfather met David Livingstone after he had come through the Mashakalumbwe country unscathed. This was considered something of a miracle, and the other natives accounted for it by believing that Livingstone was more than a man.

Selous tells the story of how, when he was travelling north, and meeting with comparatively friendly tribes, he was warned by them not to go through the Mashakalumbwe country. He accepted this advice, and made a *détour*, but lost his bearings and happened upon some Mashakalumbwe by accident. He was fiercely attacked, but was able to crawl away through the long grass, and so escape with his life. He reached a Batonga village, robbed of all he possessed, with nothing but a shirt to his back.

During the making of aerodromes for the first Cairo-to-Cape flight, C.T. had ten Mashakalumbwe among about a thousand natives working on the aerodromes, and all the thousand went in deadly fear of these ten men.

On our journey we met many wandering bands of these people. Julius, who took a very high hand with other natives, frankly feared them, and was never known to ask them to do anything. They invariably refused to give assistance, and were often extremely 'temperamental'!

Near Zimba we paid twopence each for eggs. Living in general was very dear here, especially when compared with farther north, where we were able to buy a dozen eggs for a safety-pin!

We got into thick forest country again, and the ground was boggy, so we were forced to borrow oxen once more to pull us out of the *dambos*. Kima and Bibi hated oxen for some mysterious reason and chattered with fear whenever they saw them, and one day, while the oxen were dragging the cars out of the mud, Bibi's chain became loose, and she bolted into the bush. I was horrified at losing her, for I knew that her chain would get entangled in the thick undergrowth, and that she would die of starvation if we failed to find her. Every one turned out to look for her. Kima was perturbed too. We took him into the bush and tied him up to a tree, hoping that she would see him and come back. He set up a kind of trilling call, but there was no answer from Bibi for some time. Then we glimpsed a grey bundle of fluff, darting by, but we could not be sure if it were she. Songolo, our second 'boy,' found her at last under a thorny bush, and we rewarded him with a shilling. The other boys told him that he had known all along where Bibi was, and had just waited to catch her until a reward should be offered.

We were able to make great log fires at night, and it is a wonder how Kima and Bibi escaped being roasted alive. They would insist on sitting on the logs which formed part of these fires, their little arms held above their heads, warming their blue tummies in front of the blaze. They looked such queer little mites, for they measured only about seven inches sitting down.

At night, to a camp with a log fire burning, came an old grey-bearded native, who squatted beside the blaze. He removed from his *moucha* [1] a big calabash pipe and commenced talking. We called Julius over, and told him

[1] Loin-cloth.

to sit down and interpret what the old man was saying. Our visitor rambled on, telling us of this and that, and we asked him to tell us about the birds of the forest. Picking up a guinea-fowl feather, lying near, he pulled it slowly through his fingers, then sat on for a while, as we watched him. Presently he spoke a few words, and Julius said: "Him want tobacco." G. produced his tobacco bag, and passed it on to the old grey-beard, who took a handful, and stuffed it into his pipe, lighting it with a live coal he picked out of the fire with his fingers. He inhaled the smoke with an ecstatic sigh of content, and took up the feather again, passing it slowly between his fingers.

C.T. told Julius to ask him if he knew how the rabbit became King of the Beasts. The old man smiled, and asked instead if the *Bwana* knew how the peacock got his tail. No? But the *Bwana* must know that a tail such as the kingly bird possessed could not have come there of itself. Yes, the *Bwana* should hear the story if the *Bwana* would sit up closer.

"See now, master, in the forest is a clearing, and the grass grows soft and green; and in the clearing lies the donkey, weary but exceeding wise. Give your ear, and listen to this wise donkey, how he sleeps—so—*snore*, *snore*, until the air is filled with the noise of his snores as they reach the branches of the trees, whence even a greater noise comes—a noise of flapping wings and angry cries. The hawk picks at the face of the dove, and the nightjar shrills in anger at the owl, who sits aloof on a branch and in disdain stares at nothing.

"The noise of the quarrelling birds grows and grows, so loud and so long that the donkey wakes up and says: 'Cease your chatter, vermin, and you, owl, speak. I would know what this vulgar noisy argument is about.' 'Whoo,

whoo orders me thus?' says the owl. 'Silence!' shrieks the nightjar; 'do you not see, O blind owl, that it is to the great and wise lord the donkey you speak?' 'Speak up, O owl,' says the donkey, 'and let us make an end of this *indaba*.[1] I would hear what all this trouble is about.'

"'It is that we must have a king, O donkey, to fit the wondrous fan of feathers which the weaver-birds have made of the gayest plumes of every bird: and there is to be a contest of voices, and nobody, in their jealousy, will allow another to begin. So you, O donkey, who are wise, even as your ears are long, you should be the judge of the best voice among us and award the prize; but do not think that I desire it, or to be the king, for I am as wise as thou, O mule, and the night is full of shadows and beauty in which to think.'

"Well, you see, *Bwana*, all the birds of the forest in one voice agree, and the donkey waves his long ears in agreement too, and chooses the bul-bul to open the contest. And the bul-bul sings as the clear waters do when they run over pebbles in a forest stream. 'Such beauty!' sighs the donkey, feeling soothed. 'Next you, gay kingfisher —then you, wild goose.'

"And so they all sang in their turn, *Bwana*—the partridge, the stork, and the guinea-fowl, and then the dove *coo-cooed* long and softly, and if you can believe it, my *Bwana*, the donkey slept through it all.

"And then it was the turn of the peacock, the ugly, who strode to those long ears of the donkey and sent out a long piercing shriek into the night. Whereupon the donkey woke, in a terrible fright, and shouted: 'You've won, you've won, O peacock! Take your tail!'"

Later we passed through Kolomo and Choma, through

[1] Talk or business.

Mazabuka to the Kafue river, which we crossed by the iron railway bridge. This is a magnificent piece of engineering, about two hundred yards long, with massive iron supports.

The Prince of Wales was expected to include the Kafue in his South African tour, and the place was being prepared for his visit. Bomas and huts were being built on the site where the annual Rhodesian Farmers' Show was to take place on his arrival, and there was an air of expectancy and excitement about the Rhodesians. From all over the country, people were travelling there for the great event.

We heard at the Kafue that the road to Broken Hill, a distance of about 220 miles, was better than the road we had come over, so we prepared for a good run. We set off at 6.30 A.M. and travelled as hard as possible. We found some bad bits, where we had to build branch platforms, but often the road was excellent, and we had the relief of being able to travel fast at last. The road was narrow in places and we got scratched by projecting branches of trees, and great hard pods slapped us in the face. Kima and Bibi as usual were grabbing at clusters of scarlet fruit as the car sped by. We passed through Lusaka and several Government stations, and reached Broken Hill, a lead mine, at 11 P.M. of the same day, breaking the record, we were told, for this journey. We had travelled eighteen hours, and were so smothered with dust as to be almost unrecognizable. The second car had no lights, and it had been a hard business to keep her out of the way of holes and tree stumps.

We stayed in Broken Hill two days, camped in the woods outside the mine, while the battery of No. 2 car was recharged. We again discarded kit to lighten the

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load, including the tent which had been a leaky friend to us during the rains. We were reduced to the barest necessities, but we found later that we had to scrap yet more stuff, and leave ourselves with practically nothing.

The weather was good. We had clear, sunny days, and our prospects seemed rosier.

CHAPTER X

ABERCORN TO TUKUYU

OUR road was bad, as we had been told it would be, and our progress slow, but we had left the rains behind us, even if their effects remained. There were still some very bad mud stretches and, a little farther north, rotted bridges, and we had a succession of accidents. The first of these happened twenty miles from Chiwefwe, on the road to Abercorn, when the C-spring of No. 2 car snapped. We feared that we should be stranded there for an indefinite period, as, by bad luck, this was one of the spare parts we were without. The nearest railway touches Kishutu, about 150 miles away, and there branches off to the Belgian Congo. The only thing to do was to wire to Southern Rhodesia for the spare: so C.T. unloaded No. 1 car, did some rapid driving through the night, and reached Kishutu as the operator was closing down for the night.

C.T. rushed madly in, just in time to hear the man say: "Well, good-night."

"Stop!" he yelled, half pulling the man off his chair as he made to put down the receiver. "Hold on; I have an important message to get through!"

The operator was so startled at the suddenness of C.T.'s attack that I think he would have given him the whole telegraph system, if he had asked for it. A call was put through to Nyamandhlovu, where we had a dump of spare parts. A goods train was just leaving, and our friend, Mr Seward, whom we had met down there, howling to

A ROCKY ROAD

the driver to hold it up, dashed to the dump, grabbed the box of spares in which was the spring, and threw it on the train. C.T. received it, drove like fury, and was back in camp three days after he had left. It was a rapid piece of work.

While driving hard through the night he had seen a pair of eyes shining at him in the darkness. He could not see what animal they belonged to but he took a pot-shot at it, and when he went to look at what he had hit he found he had bagged a leopard: the bullet had entered the spine and travelled up into the brain. A little farther along he saw another pair of eyes shining, and then still another pair. The place must be full of leopards, he thought, and attempted to add to his collection, but the only result of these two shots was a pair of dead ant-bears.

While C.T. was away Errol and Julius took out the broken spring, and prepared the car to receive the new one. It did not take long to fit it in, and we were on the road again about 10 A.M. We travelled about 130 miles when, to our dismay, the second accident happened. This time it was in the wheel, where some of the ball races in the hub had got crushed. The bend which had previously developed in the axle-shaft had become worse; so the shaft had to be replaced too. We sat in the road and cursed, and then got down to the job and finished it. This happened in the Machinga range of hills, a lonely and weird place of devils—or so the natives say—which terminates in solid grey rocks which loom up forbiddingly above you. Not a tree is to be seen, except on the lower-lying slopes, where there are forests of thin straight trees. The tops of the hills are hollowed out, and up there lurks a confused smell of wild animals. The tops of the hills are windswept, and we could understand the natives'

dislike of the place. The howling of the wind, as it rushes through the crevices of rock, is eerie in itself.

"*June* 18.—C.T. back. Good work! Errol has done well too. He got the axle out, everything ready and fixed to receive the new C-spring, and it only means twenty minutes more or so to get the old bus on her feet once more. C.T. is awfully bucked with him. Good kid. There are eland at the next river, but we have had no luck yet.

"*June* 19.—We started at 7.15 A.M. The road is good in this part of the country, and we did 130 miles by about 3 P.M., when something funny happened to our car. It sounded like a broken axle. C.T. got out and found that the axle would have to come off anyhow, and the wheel too. So he and Errol, with the aid of Julius, started in. They found that the trouble was two smashed ball races, so it was not so bad. We ought to get away to-morrow at 1 P.M.—bad luck. We wanted to do 235 miles, but never mind—another day!

"I have been busy helping our spare boy to make camp. I made my own shelter, and jolly smart it is too. A tarpaulin three-walled *and* roofed house, with an opening (which would have been the fourth wall) toward the fire.

"G. and Fred have gone out with their guns. We are camped at the foot of a spur of the Machingas. Jolly weird place. Miles of forest lower down, of the thin straight-tree'd variety. The hills here are of grey, angry-looking stone. The natives say that the place is haunted, and refuse to live near it.

"I bathed the monkeys in a cupful of water. The darlings were all over honey. Their little hands, whiskers, and heads were full of it, so I had to do something about it, in spite of having to be careful with water. Our next water is about a hundred miles or more from here. We

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got the honey from a nig. for a box of matches. From here we shall meet the Awemba, who sing so marvellously.

"*June* 20.—The car won't be finished for a few hours yet, so I am writing this in bed. Cannot you imagine the joy of staying in bed, after weeks of '4.30 in the morning'? We get out of our beds, shivering with cold, in the pitch darkness, and try to eat our breakfast of porridge and tinned milk, one slice of bacon, and dry bread, by the fire. We get straight out of beds in our dressing-gowns to this, and while we dress the boys wash up, and then we pack up, and get away between 6.30 and 7.30 A.M. We travel all day until dark, and sometimes we camp just before sunset. Lovely weather, but cold. I need a *kaross*, and must get one as soon as I can. The cold strikes upward through my camp bed, and all the blankets in the world on top could not keep you warm, if you had them. I've put all I can spare, which are two thin ones, under my little so-called mattress, but they make not the slightest difference.

"*June* 21.—To-day we saw eland, about 25 yards off the road, but couldn't get a quick enough shot at them. We are camped in a weird and windy spot. There are grey granite hills, rather small, with palm-trees running down to the stream near by. We left our last camp at 1.30, passed a white man and a yellow hunter to whom we spoke for half an hour, and left them at 4.30. Got some distance off and camped at a woody place about dusk.

"To-day we called at the White Fathers' Mission—charming old Frenchmen—very human and kindly. We ate bananas and tangerines, and drank home-grown coffee with them. They were greatly interested in our show, and are extremely interesting men. Their Mission was built

by themselves, with the help only of natives. It is beautifully done, and it is kept very clean. On our leaving they presented us with fruit, and came down to the cars to see us off. They duly admired Bibi and Kima, and the latter gentleman distinguished himself by tweaking one of the White Fathers' beards. This caused uproarious mirth among the natives, and the old Father enjoyed the joke like a kid.

"We got to Mpika at 12 this morning—or afternoon if you like—where we lunched with the D.C. Our camp is windy, but beautiful, with big trees all round, and from here we can see the 'station,' which is the best-kept one we have yet seen. The undergrowth has been kept down, and the grass is green and short. The house is charming, with golden-shower creeper growing over the veranda. It has also a lovely flower garden; but the thing that mars the place for the people here is the constant dread of man-eating lions; they cannot leave their doors open, so they have hit upon the wily wheeze of blocking the openings with wire mattresses, thus deriving the double benefit of fresh air and security. C.T. took a cast of a good spoor just outside the house, and is sending it home. Three man-eaters were shot within a few days just here, and skins are drying outside the gaol now. Thirteen natives were taken in eight days, and one of them in broad daylight.

"*June* 22.—Last night we had a fire burning all night. I woke up, I am sure, every hour, expecting to be pulled out of my bed by lions and eaten before anybody awoke. It was a jumpy night, really, and I'm jolly glad to see the sun.

"G. took cine. pictures of the arrival of the Chitimukulu at 2 this afternoon. He is the head of all the

CROSSING THE CHAMBESI RIVER ON THE BROKEN PONTOON

native chiefs up here, and he and the others met here, whence they are proceding to Broken Hill, carried on the shoulders of their henchmen. They will be presented to the Prince of Wales. These old villains were quite regal, especially old 'Chit.' Their followers played tunes on *marimbas*, banged drums, clapped their hands, and sang. Of course the inevitable drum-beating accompanies every *indaba*. We watched the King's prize dancer, who promptly demanded "one poun," which he didn't get.

"*June* 23.—We camped at the Deviation, near Gower Brown's, last night. We passed Kanchiwya Bridge at 4.30 P.M., where we met a young Englishman. He only came out to the country last December. The bridge was hardly finished, but he let us go over. Jolly good piece of work, that bridge. It is his first one, and he is very proud of it. At 12.30 we got to the Chambesi river.

"*June* 24.—The pontoon was patched up, more drums were lashed underneath, and two planks were put down between the shore and the pont, over which C.T. managed to drive the first car on to the pont. The suspense was terrible when, very cautiously, the boys began working the pulley rope, and hauling the concern over. The car almost submerged the old pontoon, with C.T. inside at the wheel and Errol standing beside the car keeping an eye on the business. We on the bank stood with bated breath, expecting every moment to see the whole bunch go under—and the river swarms with crocodiles! Anyhow, everything went well, but the second car nearly plopped into the river on the other side as C.T. took her off the pont, which wobbled so that he had the greatest difficulty in getting the car on to the bank before it sank right down into the deep water. G. was very busy all the

time, and got some good pictures. Errol took the monkeys and me over in a native canoe. All the kit went over by canoe. We got everything over by one o'clock, and we set off again, very thankful that we had done it, for we expected when we arrived that we should probably have had to wait there about a week while the pont was remade.

"To-night we are camped outside the Queen-mother's kraal. She 'called' this evening about five o'clock, and we are to go over later to see a dance. We shall take presents.

"*June* 25.—Not feeling fit. Chill, I think, and also a touch of the sun. Fred not too well, either.

"*June* 26.—Reached Kasama. Didn't stay more than half an hour. C.T. saw the magistrate about the road to Abercorn, and he says it is good. Errol, G. and I visited the local store, and couldn't get anything we needed but found things like eau-de-Cologne and tinned lobster!"

Most of the natives between Broken Hill and Abercorn are Awemba. In the old days they were one of the great fighting tribes of Central Africa, and they had an extremely efficient system of government. The chiefs compelled implicit obedience from the people, and their rule was so severe that if anybody offended against the tribal law by stealing, his hands were cut off, if by lying, his tongue was forfeit, and other mutilations were inflicted. They are renowned for their music. Their songs are beautiful, and they sing in glorious harmony, with exquisite cadences. Their scale is different from ours. They have mysterious half-tones, with sudden crescendos and diminuendos that leave the listener spellbound. These untutored people seem to understand music, and are able to express it dramatically. Some of their songs are like those of

modern Russian composers. Although they are wild, there runs a strain of sadness through them. The women sit in a semicircle and sing in parts, while the men lurk in the background accompanying them with deeper notes.

The first time I heard them was at dusk, camped in the forest north of Mpika. They came singing, the women with their babies on their backs. They sat down before us and sang their beautiful songs, then streaked back again into the bush. Later in the evening presents of chickens and eggs came, carried by young women and piccanins.

We had one or two minor misfortunes before we reached Abercorn, and when we got there we camped on the shores of a little lake called Chiela. A biting wind blew off the lake, and we shivered in our camp. Abercorn is a Government station standing on a hill on the fringe of the lake. It is a beautiful little station, and there are several Government officials living there.

We made a little side expedition to Lake Tanganyika, about thirty miles to the west. Tanganyika is a blue lake, amazing in its immensity, where occasional steamships pass, and natives catch fish from dug-out canoes. We swam and fished, and it was peace to lie on the sand and watch crude fishing-nets being made and fat kaffir babies eating bananas.

On the third day we left Abercorn and got into what we called the 'country of bridges,' along the borders of Northern Rhodesia and Tanganyika Territory to Lake Nyassa. We went this way to connect up with the Tanganyika road system. Of the couple of hundred bridges we crossed, we had to rebuild or reinforce at least half. They were native-made, and the native believes in saving himself work wherever he possibly can. His idea of a good

bridge is to make it look good, and that is where it ends. The natives up there use tree trunks, not always of the strongest, for the supports, and on these they lay a platform of poles. Over the whole they put as much earth as will cover it, and stamp it down until it is flat and pretty. Perhaps a chief will be responsible to the Government for a section of five miles or more of land in which are streams or drifts over which bridges must be made; so the chief gets the job done with as little trouble as possible to himself and his people, and the consequence is that the bridges are not safe—especially after heavy rains.

Those we crossed must have been up some years, and were almost useless, and certainly dangerous to us with our big cars. We would skim over one, just get the rear wheels on to the last foot or so, then hear a sickening dull thump as the rotten timbers behind gave in, and logs and earth tumbled down into a big hole in the middle of the bridge. The cars would often go right down to their chassis in the decaying mass. We spent laborious weeks digging ourselves out of them, then carefully putting in new supports and mending the yawning gaps left by the first car. No. 2 car as a rule had to wait for a bridge to be strengthened and repaired, but sometimes it just managed to get over before the whole thing tumbled down in a cloud of dust, with a noise like tearing calico. I do not know who had the worst sensation on going over: we in the first car wondering if it would hold at all, or Fred and Errol in the second wondering if it could possibly bear any further strain.

We were fortunate in this country between Broken Hill and Abercorn in getting lots of natives to help us. It delayed us for hours, of course, to scout out into the bush

A CAR BREAKS THROUGH THE BRIDGE

in search of villages, but eventually we always got boys to chop trees, for which we paid them fourpence a day—the regulation pay—and later on, when all our threepenny-pieces and pennies were gone, we gave them sixpence. The chief usually got from three to five shillings according to the amount of work done.

We became very suspicious of all bridges, and I told C.T. that if we ever got back to England I was quite certain we should get out of our car at Westminster Bridge to test the supports before driving over. Crossing those African ones was a nasty sensation : our hearts were in our mouths, we heaved sighs of relief when we were over, then on we would go, dreading the next one. Although bumpy, the roads were not too bad; we could get along somehow. The ground had dried up except occasionally in low-lying areas, where it was flat and there were no runways.

"*July* 1.—We started off gaily from Abercorn at 7.30 A.M. Our road was fairly good for some miles, then the fun began. We have hit our first bridge, and here we must camp for the night. This happened when we were seventeen miles or so out of Abercorn. This country is one succession of bridges. One hundred and eighty something of them to be crossed, and they are *all rotten*. They break under you as you stand on them—almost as you look at them. A few of the smaller ones won't matter, because it will only mean having to cut a few logs to lay across them. But the things like the one we have struck here will hold us up for a day each time. We have got a lot of savages working all out now and we shall be here the best part of to-morrow. They cut trees and pile them on to main supports log by log. Long job.

". . . Left at 2.30 P.M. to-day and did about fifteen

miles. Little bridges every few hundred yards. Small, but had to be fixed up or thoroughly examined before we could cross.

". . . Same thing, bridges rotten. Like match-boxes. Luckily there are plenty of natives here to help. We get lots of the inevitable 'koo-koo,' and sometimes, eggs. We are making cakes of most peculiar meal. It is like grass seeds ground up, and tastes like nothing, and is very gritty. The cakes are made flat and cooked in fat, and are a dark brown colour when done. I washed the little monkeys to-day, and they look adorable. We ran over an enormous mamba. Hideous snake.

". . . More bridges. Did about ten miles. Everything like yesterday.

". . . To-day we struck a beast of a bridge which had to be entirely remade. We amused ourselves by buying native snuff-boxes, made from the nut of a palm-tree—they are rather rare and quaint. We were amused at the native ladies who came and watched the making of the bridge, and who made eyes at the men, me included. I suppose I do look like a boy. We bought some honey from them.

" We arrived at the Isunga village this evening, and found the people most polite and rather cleaner than the average. Our camp is a nice one among tall trees. The natives are still bringing water and 'koo-koos' along, milk too, and kaffir beer. The head-man, whose name is Sichombe, is an easy-going old thing, and is consequently taken advantage of by all and sundry, especially by the piccanins. C.T. goes off from here to-day on an elephant hunt. There are supposed to be a lot in this vicinity. The native drums were beating all night round the gardens to drive the elephants away.

"The native girl children wear a little skirt of bark, all frayed out. It is worn very short, and swings as they walk. Most effective, with nothing else worn but a few beads round the neck.

"An old *induna* [1] from a village farther down has attached himself to us. He knows all the bridges and the best way of avoiding some of them by deviating at various sections of the road. He is old and grey, and smokes a queer pipe which sends out volumes of smoke that entirely obliterates him from view. The bowl is big, but the calabash through which the stem goes is bigger; the calabash holds water, which cools the smoke as it passes out into the stem, and so to the mouth. Julius loves him, and says: 'He be very wise old man.'

". . . Errol went off to-day to try to get up to elephant. Will be away a few days, no doubt. Got a note from C.T. saying that the elephants he is tracking are travelling fast, and that he is following them up.

". . . Sichombe, the old chief, says that most of the men are away in their *shambas*.[2] We had him up last night and gave him instructions to have all his people at the village to-day, and to send a gang of men to fix up some of the horrid little bridges ahead. This morning we have been dressing the limbs of native babies who have an awful skin disease. One of these poor little creatures has legs almost rotted away. It was an appalling task. This kind of thing is due to neglect. They allow flies to settle on a sore, and the result is what we saw to-day.

"Elephants round the village last night. The native women came in singing a delicious song, as they carried our water into camp on their heads in calabashes. The monkeys are a source of intense amusement to the legion

[1] Head-man. [2] Gardens.

of piccanins, who cluster round them, stuffing them with monkey-nuts and sweet potatoes; but the spoilt monkeys prefer Crosse and Blackwell's olives and guavas.

". . . Errol arrived last night at 10.30. He had good sport, and bagged two roan antelope. They are large beasts, almost as big as ponies, with enormous horns. He had trouble getting the natives to carry the meat to camp, but after gentle persuasion they came. To-day a great cutting up of meat is in progress, biltong being made, and crowds of piccanins are hanging around after stray pieces. Bathed monkeys, who look very smart after it.

". . . Placid and quiet day. Everybody busy. The native women brought in a large basket of honey. Errol is straining it.

". . . Got good news this evening. C.T. has bagged one elephant. He wants Errol and Julius. They leave here at 2 A.M. The monkeys are in disgrace. They have upset and sat in most of Errol's carefully strained honey, and drunk some one's shaving water. But then monkeys are made for vulgar abuse: they expect it, and they had great fun licking the honey off themselves.

". . . At 5.30 this evening the tusks came in, carried by a couple of boys. I should think they weigh about 35 lb. each. Very good tusks, though small, and they have been presented to me as being the first-fruits of the chase. C.T. wrote that he and Errol would hunt their way back to camp. G. saw a big herd of roan antelope to-day, but didn't shoot because there is too much meat in camp already. G. is a dear man; he is a wonderful companion, and invariably keeps the camp in shrieks of mirth.

" I'm going out to-morrow on my own with two boys, one as guide, the other as gun-boy.

". . . Went out on my first solo hunt to-day. It was

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a thrilling experience, not because of the game I saw, because I didn't see any, but because of the sensation of being a woman alone in the thick African forest with two savages. It was a risky thing to do, but I wanted the experience, and to know how I should feel and behave if I were really quite alone and unaided. I was out about four and a half hours, walking all the time, for I was afraid to sit down in case the boys had bad intentions, and I should have my rifle snatched. So I let them keep ahead of me in single file, and I carried my rifle myself. The one hunting boy looked all right, but one can never trust them very far. They love a rifle above anything, and they might have left me stranded and lost in the middle of the forest without one. Anyhow, all went well. They climbed big trees quite frequently to spy out the land, but saw nothing. The grass is so long that you cannot see a blessed thing; it is only chance if you do come upon anything. There was game spoor and elephant tracks all over the place. The tall grass was laid flat like a road where they had passed. My feet are tired and blistered, but I'm jolly glad I did it. I think we must have covered about sixteen miles. We walked fast. Natives get into a long stride, and travel quickly.

". . . Last night we had great excitement in camp, when at nine o'clock we heard what we thought to be elephant bashing their way through the kitchen. I was in bed, and G. and Fred were reading by the fire. I dashed out of bed into my shoes and C.T.'s old dressing-gown, which happened to be handy. G. got fearfully excited, and was all for rushing after them there and then. It didn't strike him at the moment that it was pitch-dark, and no hope of the moon rising for ages. We persuaded him to desist for a while until we had gone out to look at

the spoor, so he and Fred went out with a pocket electric torch, and discovered that Errol's two old roan antelope skins which had been put out to dry in the grass were missing, and that the terrific din we had heard was made simply by two venturesome hyenas that had snooked up and grabbed the dry skins and then beetled away into the bush with them. They must have jolly massive and powerful jaws to drag away skins weighing 40 to 50 lb. each.

"This morning they went after them, and found only the tails of the skins which had been stolen. All this was very entertaining. So to-day we've sent a pathetic verse to Errol with the two tails, carefully wrapped in G.'s old oilskin tobacco pouch.

"At one o'clock to-day a runner came in with a note from Errol saying that C.T. had bagged another elephant, and hoped to bag some more. I sent food and clothes out to them.

"Bibi and Kima are loose to-day, and are having a gorgeous time hopping about in the trees. They were very pleased to see a boy stroll in with honey in the comb in which they discovered some luscious grubs.

". . . G. got me a lovely ivory bangle, which I coveted, from a native woman. It has a natural *café-au-lait* shade in it in strips of about one and a half inches. Most curious, and, I believe, rare and valuable. It is old cow-ivory. Hyenas made an awful din in camp last night—the boys in the open 'kitchen' have built a *boma* of green boughs round it. Mouschiani says: 'He smell my face.' They are afraid of hyenas, and I don't blame them, they are loathsome. I took the monks. for a walk this evening. Kima plays 'puppy' just like one.

". . . I expect C.T. and Errol back any day now.

Natives came and listened to the gramophone last night —they are always bothering round the camp in the hope of hearing it. We got them to sing, and it sounded very pleasant. They all collected round the camp fire, and when the 'funny' laughing record was played for them they simply howled with joy.

". . . Great scare in camp last night with hyena. These brutes are becoming a nuisance. The boys have got wind up, and expect to be devoured at any moment. Of course they are really cowardly things, hyenas—wish I felt well enough to bag something.

". . . Wonderful day. It started cold and cloudy, but has turned out heavenly. I have felt ill practically all the time C.T. has been away, and to-day I feel too awful. I've had headaches all the time. Wish C.T. and Errol would come back. We haven't caught a hyena yet, though traps are out and poisoned meat. Elephants were near the village last night, but didn't hear them—only the tom-toms thrummed all night.

". . . The hunters have returned—bagged two more elephants. It was good to see them again. We move off to-morrow."

While hunting, C.T. and Errol had come upon three herds, which combined numbered about a hundred elephants. The wind was very uncertain, and every now and then the herd would get whiffs of the hunters, which naturally made them very restless. At last they commenced to move off, and the men followed them at a distance of about a hundred yards. They picked out a bull, and got behind the only available tree, a very slender one, and Errol took aim and fired for the brain, but just at that moment the elephant stepped forward, and the bullet struck on the hard bone skirting the brain patch.

Almost the same moment C.T. fired, and hit him somewhere below the ear. Suddenly, with a ferocious bellow, the leader brought the whole herd, a hundred strong, full at them. It was a hair-raising moment. Twenty yards at least from the little tree was a huge ant-hill, about thirty feet high, and with the speed of deer they ran for it, firing as they went, to try to turn the infuriated herd. By the time they had reached the foot of the hill, the elephants crashed by on either side of the tree they had just left. The wounded bull went screaming mad, tearing up bushes with his trunk, as he raced past at the back of the herd. C.T. started to move down the ant-hill in order to get a photo of him, but the movement must have drawn the animal's attention, for, with a bellow of rage, he charged up the hill like an express train, and C.T. had only time to dash the camera at the gun-boy, grab his rifle, and fire in a flash. The beast took just one back-header and two rolls off the side of the hill. Afterward the distance was measured, and it was found that the muzzle of C.T.'s gun was only three feet from the elephant's head when he fired.

On July 24 we took the road again. It was bad, and the treacherous bridges still lay in wait for us. On this evening we found ourselves faced with an awful slope, with a gradient of one in five, just above a steep drift. The first car got half-way up the appallingly steep incline, but on looking back we found there was no sign of the second car. In trying to get up she had slipped her worn brakes and the boys, who should have been holding her and blocking the wheels, seeing her rushing backward, lost their heads and ran, and she simply crashed down the hill like the proverbial Gadarene swine, into the river below. Luckily she hit a tree, which stopped her head-

A CRASH

long plunge to some extent, otherwise she would surely have turned a back somersault and killed the driver.

We camped on the slope of the hill that night, with what appeared to be a crumpled heap of car at the bottom. The boys stood round in excited and chattering groups as we tried to find out how much damage was done, but it was impossible to see. All the boys we could get were rounded up to get her on to solid ground, and after hours of hard work, during which it seemed that she must break in two, with the aid of the block and tackle the car was got out, and C.T. was able to overhaul her. The damage was not as great as it might have been ; the axle assembly had been broken, and the torque tube bent, the radiator damaged, and there were a few minor injuries, but eighteen hours after the crash the whole job was done, and we were able to tackle the hill once more.

This time the chief warned his boys to be more careful. Blocks of wood and stone were laid in readiness, and the boys held the car. She got up a certain way under her own power, and then the block and tackle was used, and foot by foot she was dragged up the hill.

By this time we were travelling through Tanganyika, and this section of it quite puts Rhodesia into the shade. It is mountainous, the trees are beautiful, and a blue haze hangs over everything until the afternoon. There are blue mountains in the distance, and mountains close round you, and, to complete our joy in the place, the air was warm and sparkling. There seemed to be a breath of spring in it. The bridges were improving a little, but we were slowed up by the terrific climbs up the hills.

" *July* 27.—We were simply whacked yesterday afternoon when we came to this, we believe, our worst steep hill. We *cannot* get the cars up until we have collected

about fifty boys, and then we shall have to block-and-tackle up with the fifty pulling like dentists. It is like the side of a house, with the most awkward curly bits and twists to negotiate. I suppose the uphill distance is about 400 yards or more, and then, when we get over and down to the other side, we shall have to prepare for more hills.

"The natives here are a peculiar and evil-looking crowd. The young bloods tie up their hair with grass into two imitation bucks' horns, and they look as if they might be capable of doing anything. They did, in fact, spear a hunter here two weeks ago. They didn't like the cut of his clothes, or perhaps the way he manicured his nails, so they shoved a few assegais into him. When they came prancing and shouting down the hill last evening I said: 'Me for my rifle!' Anyhow, they were quite peaceful, though rowdy, but I felt all evening that they might come back from their village in the night and start playing some of their innocent little tricks on the sleeping camp, especially as they were distinctly drunk. During the night a strange native came into camp, and I felt rather nervous; I wondered how many more were behind him. But I need not have bothered, all was peace after that."

After hours of work with block and tackle to get the cars over the hill, we were able to drive off again through the most beautiful country. We thought this part of Tanganyika Territory must surely be the most beautiful in Africa. You travel along the side of blue mountains and look down, from what seem impossible heights, on to valleys and lesser hills below, and over all hangs a blue mist which is like a gauzy veil with blue sunlight penetrating it and lighting it up with a million shades of brown, green, red, silver, and all the colours of the rainbow. Maidenhair-fern grows by the roadside, tall palms and

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small fluffy ones are in profusion everywhere. The air is crisp and clean and oh! it is a pure joy to live. The beautiful little villages nestle among the banana-trees, and the natives practically live on the fruit. They also grow corn, and have the neatest little gardens on the hill-sides. Their huts, made of bamboo and thatch, look rather like those of the South Sea islands. The people who live near Tukuyu and round Nyassa were the cleanest and neatest of all the natives we saw on the journey.

The next night we slept on the Tukuyu side of the Igali Pass. The road wound in and out of the mountains, and sometimes we seemed to be half-way up to heaven, then down we would come, and take a hairpin bend round another hill. There were some parts of the road that made us think of a Surrey lane, glorified in size, of course. Tukuyu was the loveliest Government station we had yet seen. It was even prettier than Mpika. It is like a park, laid out with flower-beds, and the roads leading to the different houses are bordered by trees. The roses were in bloom as we passed, and made splashes of red and pink on the green of the lawns.

CHAPTER XI

NYASSA AND MAERERES

FROM Tukuyu we made a four hours' run to see Lake Nyassa. We came to it with a feeling of gladness. It was glorious seeing this great mass of water after the miles and miles of land over which we had travelled. It is like the sea in colour, and waves dash on the beach. Storks, plovers, and wild water-birds in hundreds settle on the little sand-banks by the water's edge, uttering mewing cries, and darting suddenly to the crest of a wave, whence they return with shining fish in their bills. The Livingstone Mountains opposite rise from the lake, covered in mist and cloud, having the blue look of mountains in fairy pictures.

We had travelled south to Nyassa, which was off our road, in order to pick up a dump of food and spare parts which should have been on Mwaya beach. We found that only the food had been sent down the lake from Karonga, and not the spare parts, so that our next dump of spares for the cars would be at Nairobi, in Kenya Colony, a long journey ahead.

We watched the little brown-bodied children play on the sand, and their mothers and sisters pass by carrying water-pots or baskets of bananas on their heads. They are called the Mwankondi people. They are beautifully proportioned, and seem to be a strong and virile race. The women wear nothing but a bark girdle round the waist, with two long streamers falling to the feet in front. But strangely enough, although the women are practically

naked, the men go fully clothed in beautiful, flowing white *kanzus*. Others of the men wear black *limbo*, with the two ends crossed in front, and fastened round their necks behind. Some of the women wear a copper band round the waist, and the richer ladies have as many as five or six of them. Living was very cheap. We could buy about four dozen eggs for a shilling, and chickens were about threepence each.

We were able to get fruit, of which we stood in great need. There were big baskets of oranges and bananas, all for the price of a few cents.[1]

We bought some ivory bangles at Nyassa. The natives discovered that we were interested, and they brought wonderful specimens, some of which were about two inches wide, the price varying from six to sixteen shillings each.

Some years before I had seen Victoria Nyanza, and now Tanganyika and Nyassa helped me to realize one of my great wishes—to see the big lakes of Africa. We spent two glorious days at Nyassa, bathing and resting on the sands, and then we turned back on the road to Tukuyu, back through the Igali Pass.

It was interesting going along the same road which we had passed about a week ago in the opposite direction. It gave us almost a new impression of this lovely place. About twenty-seven miles after leaving Tukuyu we got on to the Nairobi road. We had to climb practically all the way through the Igali Pass; gradients of one in seven and one in five had to be negotiated. We were lucky in getting a few natives to push us, otherwise heaven alone knows how we should have got up. The roads were excellent but extremely soft, and it continually rains a soft, misty rain in these mountains.

[1] Cent, East African coinage = 100th part of a shilling.

The sun was shining through the rain, and the place seemed to be all colours—emerald, blue, and purple of grassy slopes; red, gold, and mauve of flowers; over all there hung a haze like powder-blue gauze. It is a wonderful country, this Tanganyika. Then on, the country gradually undergoing a change, through green, wooded, and mountainous country to grass plains and smaller, thorny trees. The weather grew warmer during the days, with nights rather cold and generally windy. We were on our way to Maereres, a native village in Tanganyika, where we hoped that we should find out from the natives the best locality for game.

We intended making camp for at least a month, to enable Mr Glover to get moving pictures of big game. C.T., as soon as we arrived, made inquiries of the local people, and found that if we pushed off north-west into the bush for a distance of about twenty-five miles we should find the best place. He decided to make a base camp within a couple of miles of the village, to be well out of the way of flies and other nuisances attendant on a native village, but still to be close enough to get milk and eggs every day. Grass huts were made, and the second boy was to stay behind to look after things, and to do the cooking for any of us who might be in camp. It was decided that some of us should from time to time go out to the photographic hides,[1] and also do some hunting farther afield.

The first day we were at Maereres Mr Glover got a picture of elephant. This was amazing luck: he did not expect to get up with them so soon. He, Errol, and I were alone in camp when some natives came in, excitedly

[1] A photographic 'hide' is a tiny hut built to resemble the surroundings, in which the photographer hides and photographs game.

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talking about elephant. They had seen them in a reedy marsh a couple of miles off. Mr Glover did not wait longer than it took to collect his camera, then disappeared into the bush with the boys. In about two hours he returned, greatly pleased at having got some feet of good film. He had been able to get fairly close, but had found difficulty in photographing the elephants, because the water in the marsh was up to his knees, and the grass and reeds were about twelve feet high. When the elephants moved forward, closer to the photographer, the boys ran away, and left him without his rifle, until they plucked up courage, when beckoned to, and returned.

The next day we spent in getting everything ready for the morrow, when C.T., G., and I were trekking out on foot to the 'Place of the Game.' Errol was to stay behind to overhaul the cars, and Fred to do some writing.

"*August* 7.—We left the camp about eight o'clock and picked up the carriers in Maereres about 10.30.

"We then walked, through thick sand most of the way, for six miles, and at 12 o'clock we camped at this little village, where three grass huts had been prepared for us. We were advised by the natives to stay here for the night, because it is dangerous to go on farther on account of lions, and in any case there would have been no time before dark to make a *boma* on the plain where we are to make our permanent camp.

". . . To-day has been a day of days to us. We started out at eight o'clock with our twenty carriers, and *how* can I write about the game we saw. It was hard walking, and my toes were causing me agony—fairly new veldtschoen. But still, the wonder and thrill of seeing the masses of game repaid me a million aches. We literally ran into herds of eland, impalla, roan antelope,

duiker, and other buck. Then, as we got into a little wood of grey scrubby mimosa, we saw the head of a giraffe moving. G. grabbed his camera, and got what I think must be a magnificent picture of him. The anticipation of bumping into lion made the last half of our trek exciting. The country here is 'stupid with them,' as G. says. At one little *vlei* the carriers stopped us, and told us that on four occasions people had met lions just here, and that they were dangerous, one man having been pursued by two of them while five others sat and watched the fun! So the boys thought discretion the better part of valour. But we *wanted* to see lion, which was one of the reasons we had come, and we walked through, and, to our disappointment, saw none. Then we arrived at this place, which is to be our photographic playground for some weeks. We stopped at the edge of a *vlei*, and immediately chose it as the site for one of the hides. From where we stood we could see about forty or fifty giraffe grazing on the plain about a mile away. After about half an hour three of them came toward us and inspected us. They are amazing creatures—distinctly prehistoric in appearance, I think, and they move in a fascinating kind of gliding gait. About half a mile away we saw five or six hundred zebra, moving in an apparently unending line. Dotted about on the plain were herds of impalla, giraffe, and eland.

"The carriers left G. and Julius to get the *impashla* started for the building of the hide, while they went off half a mile away to a water-hole to make this camp, where we shall stay until the hides are built. We three have our beds side by side inside a thorn *boma* and Julius is outside now, with the boys, preparing and eating *chikula*.[1] C.T.

[1] Food.

and I went off earlier in the afternoon and got them their beloved meat—eland. Our luck was good, for we saw, while strolling back, a couple of full-grown lions and five baby cubs, on the opposite bank of the water-hole. The old lions looked at us and didn't give a hang, while the babies played about like puppies, falling over themselves and cuffing each other's ears. We were all keyed up and thrilled when we got back at sundown. We walked into a leopard as we approached our *vlei*.[1] G. got a shot at it, but it flashed off like a streak.

". . . We heard lions roaring hard this morning. G. got a close-up picture of one asleep under a tree. He was in deep shadow, and G. thinks that the picture will be a silhouette. As soon as Mr Simba [2] saw G. he was off like a flash. They are so jolly quick: if they charged before you could shoot, you could kiss yourself good-bye. No shooting is to be done for obvious reasons; photography is of the first importance. Poor C.T. has a bad ankle —thorns. The ground is thick with them, and they are very poisonous. The trees are mostly mimosa, and they have thorns which look like miniature buffalo horns, a strong bulbous base, with a thorn sticking out of each bulbosity.

". . . We three walked out about two miles to-day to another water-hole, where the game goes to drink, and there made a most impressive hide—or shall we say 'unimpressive,' as that is the object of hides? It is camouflaged to look like the bamboo growing on the banks of the water-hole. G. saw two lions this morning actually walking on perfectly friendly terms with a herd of eland. We have heard before, that when lions are well

[1] Marsh; in some cases it means a dried-up marsh.
[2] Lion.

fed, the game knows and is not afraid of them, so asks them out to tea occasionally. Of course we, being disbelieving heathens, laughed at this theory, but G., and the native *jumbi* [1] who was out with him, actually saw this. G. didn't get a picture of it unfortunately. They were too far off, and he could not get up to them on the open plain.

". . . My first night in a hide was weird. The wind whistled and howled through the frail structure, which is made of fairly stout poles, covered with grass and reeds. It is quite comfortable inside, like a little room, but I know that a hard push could knock it down. Well, as to how I felt last night? I felt that the whole thing was unreal. I was just a dot in another dot that was the hut. It seemed so queer to be in the very heart of a *vlei* where ravening lions, elephants, and other fiercenesses lurked. How the wind howled! The grass fell out of the roof and walls on to us, and I could see the stars. It rustled, and I could not tell whether the rustle was the footstep of a beast, or merely more grass shaking loose.

"During the night we heard a lion, a jackal, and one or two minor sounds. I wonder what will happen to-night. You feel so cut off from the world, so cut off from things you cling to in normal living—the comfort of soft beds, baths, safety, and all the thousands of things you need in home life. It is like sitting outside yourself and watching from a distance the self you know so well. Anyhow I soon went to sleep in this strange environment, and to-day I feel quite normal again. Hope G. gets some good pictures soon.

". . . We hear lions almost every morning, at about

[1] Head-man.

four o'clock, too early to photograph. Giraffe are coming close up now. We went out this afternoon to get meat for the boys, and G. got a zebra. We got back late, and it was weird walking in the dark. I expected to run into lion at any moment. We saw eyes glowing in the dusk—or they might have been fireflies. The boys were simply in a mortal funk, and I don't blame them. They refuse as a rule to be out after dark. It is too dangerous. We had to cross a small river, with only a log bridging it. I am glad I was undignified enough to crawl over, for G. tried to walk it, and fell in. And there are crocs. in the river too. *Ugh!* Got a poisonous thorn in my leg, same as C.T.'s.

". . . A lion sniffed round the hide last night. The hide appeared to be falling to pieces, and I was reminded of the 'Huff and I'll puff, and I'll blow your house in' story. G. got a magnificent picture of a giraffe this morning. It was as inquisitive as a monkey, and came quite close. I went out in blue pyjamas to see if it would move, which it did—toward me. It played about for an hour, then calmly strolled off. We called it Gladys.

". . . This is the windiest place on earth, I think. The hide is being patched up this morning. We are going to shoot a zebra to-day and leave it lying outside the hide, ten or fifteen yards away, as bait for lions. If they come to the meat we ought to get a picture. Our friends grunted again during the night. I am beginning to think of them in very familiar terms. Lions seem nothing to us men of the *goosu*![1]

". . . G. got a picture of about a hundred vultures on a carcass of zebra. They flew all over our hide,

[1] Bush.

screeching, croaking, and dropping pieces of bad meat on the roof.

" It is painful to hunt round here because of the shrubs, which grow about two feet high, and are covered right up the stalk with prickly blobs which tear your legs and ankles to pieces. They get in under the skin and hurt terribly. But our legs are gradually getting used to it, and we don't notice hunks of flesh being ripped off in the excitement of the chase.

" . . . We sat and thrilled awhile last night when 'things' came and gnawed the dead zebra. There were wild dogs, and a leopard. I could hear the leopard sniff round our hut and chew things up for a bit, then stop and clear off. Yesterday when we came back from our hunt we came on the freshly gnawed bones of a beast which had been killed and eaten by our pals the lions about three nights ago. These were strewn about under a tree about 150 yards from the hide.

" The sunsets here are magnificent, blazing red, with lights that turn the trees and grass to glorious shades of pink and orange and mauve.

" . . . To-day we moved to the water-hole hide. Rather a nice change. Hope better luck here, although the stuff taken up to now has been good.

" . . . Went out with rifles, saw nothing until we got back here, as the sun was going down. Spotted eland.

" . . . Got my eland, after hard going. We were hot on their track, and could only follow them by wading through a watercourse, which was really a long stretch of water-holes. We had to get through that way or walk round about four miles. The slimy water and thick mud beneath were not so bad as the knowledge that crocodiles

infested the pools. My eland was a most elusive beast, and when I did get a chance of a good shot I was so eager not to miss that I did, either under or too high. It is extraordinary how easy it is to miss even perfect shots. I think the rifle was too heavy. My own I left in camp, and brought Errol's ·350, which is too heavy to hold all day. I'm not very enormous, being only 5 ft. 3 in. high, and 110 lb. heavy. G. made some fine shots—got two buck, one at 350 yards.

". . . I sat up and took notice last night—thought a lion was sniffing round the hide, which is *most* frail and like a bird's nest, but there was such a pandemonium going on all the time that we could not be certain. Five lions were all busy roaring at once round the neighbourhood of the first hide, which is about a mile away. They then came nearer, within about half a mile, and made awful noises. It is weird being stuck out in the veldt in a little grass shelter with these beasts round you. Even if one is not afraid, it seems to make your spine quiver. It is rather pleasant perhaps, but an awfully thrilly thrill. I think I like it. But I hate things to sniff round the place where I sleep. The nasty part of last night was the realization that every blessed one of our cartridges was finished. All we had was one revolver cartridge. More came in to-day from the base camp, but, let me tell you, it isn't nice being without them. The mere knowledge of having them gives you moral support.

" Hundreds of little birds live in the reeds that camouflage our hide, and they all take flight together out of them, making the air quivery with their wings. They are nice little chaps, and chatter to each other all day long. No game to be seen at all to-day.

". . . Got letter from camp. Fred arrived at eight last night. To-day he is staying with G. in the centre hide. They will sleep there. Fred wants 'copy.' G. got lovely picture this morning at central hide of eland close up, lying, standing, and walking. A giraffe came and scratched himself on the hide this morning, and began nibbling off the leaves above. Errol arrived later and he and I took rifles out. Saw nothing near enough to shoot, as it was getting too late to follow things up. G. left with Julius and his camera for four or six days; he is on the track of buffalo. We are camped now at the kitchen camp, to give the hides a chance and hope more game will come up to them. I have often mentioned shooting, but it is not done near here. We go twelve or fourteen miles off for it.

"Julius was sitting cooking in the thorn-branch enclosed kitchen *boma* just before he left, and dropped the kettle he was holding when he looked up almost into the face of a big lion. The old thing paced up and down for a bit, and then, when Julius was trying to decide what to do about it, ambled off into the bush. It is a pity we don't see more of these chaps in the daytime. We are dying to get a good picture of one. I am cooking a concoction of rice and pearl barley for lunch, to be eaten with milk. Lord, how I'd love some ham and eggs! It is quaint the things your soul craves for when you haven't much food. We always tell each other what we'd like every time we eat our 'porridge.' Yet we are jolly contented and happy, and are only anxious that we should get a good picture soon, to take home with us.

". . . We went a long, long trek to-day after game, and feel dead-beat but happy. I brought off a most

successful neck-shot at 300 yards with my ·275 Rigby. The eland dropped like a stone. I used a soft-nose bullet, and it was rather jolly to hear, 'Oh, pretty shot!' after my rotten shooting the other day. Coming home, Errol, the hunting boy, and I almost 'trod' on a leopard, or so C.T. says. We were so dog-tired that we must have been walking with our eyes shut. C.T. was behind and saw him jump up. When we got back we discovered that C.T. was missing. He had branched off into the bush to try for the leopard, but lost him in the long grass. Later he came in and explained where he had been, and that was the first we had heard of the leopard.

"G. came back full of beans this morning to find us all in bed! He has had gorgeous luck. Got buffalo charging. I'll take my hat off to him for courage, as he doesn't seem to mind anything when he's filming. He got a panorama of the whole herd too, about four hundred strong. When they all came for him G. stopped and fired and bagged one of them, then he and the boys, of course, had to beat it for the nearest tree. G. suddenly realized that Julius had simply faded into space, so he looked hard for a tree, saw one and jumped for a branch, well above ground, which promptly broke. The buffalo were by this time almost upon them. He made a final effort to get into the thorn-tree, which fortunately succeeded, for the buffalo were upon them, surrounding them, snorting and pawing with rage everywhere. Julius was safely up another tree, and when G. called to him that he was a wonderful tree-climber he rippled with dignity, and said with pride that 'black men all wonderful tree-climbers.' It is amusing to think of the slow-moving Julius bustling up a tree like a monkey.

" . . . Boys brought news of elephant to the hide to-day, so we trekked off with camera and three bearers. Got into bush that looked as if it were just an elephant playground. Almost all the big mimosa-trees were uprooted. Mimosa is in full blossom just now and the air simply aches with its scent. We didn't see one elephant. A boy shinned up a tall mimosa, a most ticklish job, I should think, and spied out the land. He saw their tracks away to goodness knows where, so we gave it up, realizing that we could never catch up with them.

" A boy with us to-day has amazing eyesight. He saw *tongolo* [1] which we could not even pick up with the glasses, I should think about three miles off. The plains are very flat, with sometimes a fringe of trees in the distance, which makes it almost impossible to spot buck through the mirage which shows during the middle hours of the day.

" . . . Got lovely giraffe picture, big ones and babies. Got impalla picture too. They jumped prettily for the camera. C.T. and Errol just in. Errol is jolly bucked at getting his first buffalo. He also bagged an enormous spotted hyena. They are fierce beasts round here, and go about bagging native children and limbs of niggers. When G. was out one stood over him during the night while he was asleep and sniffed at his body, and Julius loosed off the shotgun at the old thing and hit him. Anyway, it sent the old hyena off G.'s tummy.

" We go back to base camp to-morrow, and so off to Nairobi, and hope to get there in five days or so. Saw several new lion kills while we were out to-day, and I was very interested to see just near the bones the place where

[1] Eland.

the lions had buried the innards of the giraffe they had killed. It is a quaint thing to do, I think, and rather neat and tidy of them.

". . . Broke up camp and returned to base. Bibi died. She was bitten by a snake, we think. The poor little soul came up to me, crawling painfully, and practically died in my arms. It was awful losing her so suddenly after such a long absence."

Kima was rather heartless over the death of poor Bibi. He did not appear to miss her a bit, but perhaps he did at night, when he realized that his soft fluffy little pillow was no longer there. While we were away, we were told, he calmly left camp for three days. Errol was distracted, and did not dare send me word of his disappearance. He hunted vainly, and gave up all hope of ever finding Kima, but, on the third day, the truant strolled into camp carrying his tail high, and as near as anything saying to a score of little grey monkeys sitting in a tree close by: "Just stick around, you chaps, for a minute or twain, while I go into camp and see if my people have anything in the way of guavas!" When somebody dashed out suddenly and grabbed him by the tail he kicked and squealed, then sulked all day, and refused to say a word to anybody. He moaned out messages to his pals in the trees, but they were tired of waiting for him, and scuttled off on a new game somewhere else—perhaps in the monkey-apple trees by the water-hole.

Before we left Maereres, elephant visited the camp at night. They could be heard crashing down bushes and young trees. As they approached, we could hear that strange sound made by their intestinal rumblings. The base camp must have been on one of their 'roads,' for there were traces of them all around when we came;

then one night they simply walked right through the camp. It is a marvel to me that they did not knock the grass huts down. C.T. lit petrol fires to scare them off, and they crashed forward, screaming and rumbling on their way.

CHAPTER XII

DODOMA TO MONGALLA

WE were on the road again. We travelled through dry thorn-tree country, over good roads, and through air suggestive of wood-smoke rising in the early morning, an essence, an intangible something that sparkled its way into our senses. A blue veil of smoke or mist, or both, floated over the grass and hills, and we saw sudden splashes of peachlike blossom growing on little round Noah's Ark trees, dotted among the mimosas by the roadside. The game peeped at us, then darted away at the sound of our approach.

We reached Dodoma, where we had to remain a few days owing to the severe tonsillitis and high temperature I had developed. Then on, over sandier and scrubbier country, where there were fewer natives and less water. Then we broke another axle on the bank of a big sand-river [1] near the borders of Tanganyika and Kenya Colony.

Our luck was dead out. We had no spare axle. At Lake Nyassa, when we found that our dump of spares had not arrived, we had hoped that we should have no more breakdowns until we reached Nairobi, but the gods had decreed otherwise, and lo! we were forced to remain for two sickening weeks while C.T. and Errol left us and hurried off in the first car to Kondoa Irangi. From there C.T. wired to Nairobi for the spares to be brought out to them by anybody who might be coming through. But in Nairobi nobody seemed to know anything about our dump.

[1] A river gone completely dry in the dry season.

More wires were exchanged but it could not be found, and the upshot of the matter was that C.T. was obliged to go all the way into Nairobi, about 110 miles, to look for it himself. It was finally located in a Mombasa warehouse, where it had lain for almost a year. This was one of the very rare occasions on which our dumps failed to reach the appointed place. As soon as it arrived at Nairobi by train from Mombasa, C.T. collected it and drove day and night back to us.

We others had a dreary time of waiting; the two weeks seemed like two years. It was maddening to be so near Nairobi, our objective for months, and not to be able to reach it. The country round us was very dry and uninteresting, with leafless trees and powdery bleached sand, sometimes four to six inches deep.

But we had exciting nights with lions. We had some little grass huts, made in a clump of mimosa-trees on the bank of the river, which was, at that time of year, dry, with not a trickle of water in it, and the bed, feet deep with sand. There was an old Dutch hunter camped twenty yards from us who was waiting there for news of elephant, and he often came to our huts, and yarned to us about lions. His rifle was ancient, and we wondered how he could possibly bag anything with it; but when you looked at him you felt that if a rifle could possibly go off at all it would be an effective weapon in his hands.

He had six dogs of a mixed breed—and fierce! Every night we were awakened by them, whimpering or baying. They smelt leopards and hyenas down at the sand-well in the river bed. One night at twelve o'clock we heard two shots, then infuriated roars. Our old hunter had been disturbed by the barking of the dogs near his hut. He got out of bed and saw two glowing lights reflected by the

firelight, so he banged off his ancient weapon; and we heard a cough and maddened roar, then the dogs renewed their barking. Our friend banged off once more at the moving shapes, and called to us to come up. We saw blood spoor, but it was no use following it in that pitch darkness. The next day he tried to follow up the spoor, but lost it on hard ground. Natives came in a day later and told us that they had come upon the lion lying dead in a patch of reeds some miles off.

The dogs emitted yelps and barks so often that we never knew whether they were baying the moon or barking at animals coming to drink at the rough wooden troughs at the well. Once at bedtime, after we had played poker for cigarettes to while away the hours before going to bed, we heard the dogs making a terrific commotion about ten yards away in the river bed. The moon was waning and the light was none too good. We wondered why the two shapes lying on the sand did not come up when we yelled: "Come on, you flea-bitten hounds, chuck it!" We called again, then gave it up, thinking that they would bark if they wanted to, anyhow. The next morning we saw where the two 'dogs' had lain. They had been lions, watching us as we laughed over our game. Their spoor was very plain, and there were deep dents in the sand where they had been lying. A quaint life.

We were very short of food. Occasionally people passed and gave us cigarettes and bread; and one kind lady, who passed through in a car, stopped, had a good look at Fred and G., and said: "Now, let me see, you look clean enough—that saves my soap—but peaches, yes, I think you'd like the tin of peaches!" I hugged myself behind the tree, where I was in hiding, and

promised myself all the juice. Kima lapped up two peaches while we were not looking, but then he, naughty one, probably liked peaches better than we did.

Sometimes elephants paid us visits. All these exciting visitations happened during the night or early in the morning before it was light; and we were often startled out of our sleep by a shriek, or tearing, crackling sounds, as they crashed through the dry bush.

I closed Kima down in his tin house every night with the medicine chest and an old iron pulley block I found by the troughs. We told him that leopards like little monkeys, especially little plump ones like himself, so he made no noise and slept peacefully until we took him out in the mornings, when he could romp around in the trees again.

We were able to move off again on the 27th of September—a year and three days after we had set out on our journey from Cape Town. We heard our old car purring into camp about four in the morning, and we leapt out of our beds to greet C.T. and Errol and to hear the 'news.' They told us that on the way to Nairobi at night they had come upon seven lions sitting in the road, and were so surprised that in bringing the car to a standstill they stopped the engine. The lions simply sat there in front of them, not moving an inch, looking at the headlights. They had to do something to get them out of the way while they cranked up, so C.T. fired, and bagged one, and the others promptly cleared off into the bush. The next morning they stopped on the road somewhere outside Nairobi for coffee, with the dead lion lying where it had been thrown in the back of the car, and a game warden who happened to be there casually asked C.T. where the animal had been shot. When he was told he said: "Ha,

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you're in for it! Do you know you'll have to pay a fifty-pounds fine for that? You shot it in the game reserve." C.T. had not had the faintest notion he had committed this crime, so he thought he had better go straight away, complete with his nice lion, to the O.C. game wardens in Nairobi, and own up. He was let off with a warning, but the skin was seized.

Our road led us through Iringa and Arusha in Tanganyika Territory, which before the war was German East Africa. There were a good many streams to cross, but the bridges were solid and strong. The thick sand outside Arusha is appalling. It is partly lava dust from Mount Meru, which is volcanic. Mount Meru is rather lovely. It was capped with snow when we passed, and mist floated above the summit. Farther on we saw Kilimanjaro with its majestic peaks hidden in snow and cloud, towering above the smaller mountains grouped round it.

We saw Masai women, decorative in their soft buck-skins, necklets, wristlets, and anklets of brass. They hang as many as two dozen bead rings in their ears, all through the same hole. The weight of them must be terrific. I think they feel it, because they walk with their heads down. All their ornaments are heavy, and I wondered how they could move at all. Their brass necklets ranged from sizes just to fit the neck, to larger ones coming down to their shoulders like an Elizabethan ruff. They came to the streams and filled their large oval calabashes with water. These they carried in leather loops or pouches on their backs.

The men wandered about in groups, decorated with any old kind of tin or circular wooden block in their ears. It seems that the larger the hole in the lobe of the ear, the greater the smartness of the individual.

The Masai are nomadic, wandering on with their herds of cattle and goats. I think they are one of the most fascinating tribes in Africa. They have a very aloof and proud bearing—the women especially. To my mind they are quite beautiful. They have perfect limbs and their skin is smooth, firm, and of a mellow brown tone.

We passed through the Athi plains, where we saw thousands of head of game, wildebeest, hartebeest, wild pig, and buck of every kind, and when it grew dark we saw hyena slinking across the road, a lynx or two, and little gazelle nibbling the tender grasses under the trees in the woods bordering Nairobi. Then Nairobi itself. It was strange coming into a town lit up with electricity, straight from out of the wild, and to the bustle of cars and jangle of rickshaw bells after the loneliness and solitude. Everybody there seemed busy dashing about doing things. We soon became infected, and we, too, dashed about 'doing things.' While C.T. went off on official matters Errol went to the garage where he was in charge of the overhauling of the cars, and we others to buy provisions, to have watches mended, and to have new shorts and shirts made for the whole expedition. I brought out my one and only frock, bought a pair of shoes to go with it, and flashed about the streets of Nairobi in rickshaws, with Kima, wearing a new belt and chain, perched on my shoulder, making faces and jabbering at dear peaceful old horses that passed us by. He didn't hold with horses, and treated hounds with contempt, especially when he was safe in my arms!

We were given a very warm welcome in Nairobi, and our time was very well occupied in lunching and dining with the officials there. Sir Edward and Lady Grigg, the new Governor and his wife, arrived the day before our

departure; and Nairobi fairly bristled with excitement, and flags waved everywhere.

Nairobi is a queer, fascinating town with an 'atmosphere' hard to describe. It is European enough with its hotels and houses, but just when you begin to believe that it is a very new and flourishing little European town you are brought up suddenly with a feeling that you *must* be in the East. It has one important main street in which stand, side by side, a little modiste shop, with smart hats and gowns displayed in the windows, a chemist's shop, a bank, and a tool or bicycle shop. Round the corner, a few paces to the left, is the Indian Bazaar—a short street belonging entirely to the East, where there are Indian tailors who run up a suit for you in a day, and stores in which can be bought anything from lovely silks and ivory down to a bootlace.

There are cars on the streets, hundreds of cars, driven by bronzed girls and men in big *terai* hats. A flash of bright wheels goes by and you see a rickshaw pass with a girl in a pretty summer frock sitting inside, drawn along to the various shops by a grinning black boy.

In front of the shops and on the steps of the bank may be seen groups of jolly-looking people—coffee-planters, perhaps—chatting to each other about things in general—rifles, coffee, and cotton in particular. There seems to reign a spirit of cheerfulness and expectancy, as if everybody had something interesting to do and expected 'old Brown' or somebody to roll up at any moment from his farm with a good yarn to tell over a 'spot of lunch' at the Stanley Hotel.

When we were ready to leave we packed up the cars, got our provisions in, and again discarded a few personal treasures—including the camp bed we had kept in case of

severe illness. People said: "You'll never get through the swamps farther north, but good luck to you!" C.T. got a lot of money changed into small coins, and off we sped along the glorious roads of Kenya, over soft, rolling grass hills, through patches of forest and smiling valleys into Uganda. It was beautiful. The greens and yellows of the grass and trees, combined with a warm, wet earth smell, were in striking contrast to the dry latter part of Tanganyika. It was such a joy to us being able to travel really fast at last, and we simply romped over the Kenya and Uganda roads.

After we left Nairobi we crossed the Great Escarpment up into the lake country by Naivasha and Nakuru. It was warm during the day, but at night in that altitude we almost froze in our sleeping bags. We crossed the Equator at 10,000 feet above sea-level, and we shivered with cold —particularly one of our party, who was ill with fever, with a temperature of 103°. We covered him up at night with all the coverings we could find, but the wind was so cutting that it got through everything. We, of course, had no tent, and our only shelter was a tarpaulin, which merely flapped in the wind, affording no real refuge from the biting gale.

Lakes Naivasha and Nakuru are smaller than some other African lakes, but their beauty is beyond words. Lake Naivasha resembled a mirror set in turquoises, for the slanting rays of the setting sun made the water glisten like silver, and the hills surrounding it blue with the soft haze of distance. And Lake Nakuru—smaller, but very beautiful, too—was also a fairy picture.

The farming districts looked very prosperous as we passed. We caught glimpses of healthy crops of grain, and near Nakuru mealies seemed to thrive. There was cotton ripening, and from what we were told, and could

UGANDA DANCERS

see ourselves, cotton will be a great industry in Kenya and Uganda. There were many Government experimental plots of growing cotton, and we met experts in various parts examining and reporting on them. When the transport facilities in Uganda and the Southern Sudan are better the output of cotton should be enormous. We met motor-lorries carrying cotton to the nearest river route or railhead from the general dumping stations in Uganda. Even the natives right up in the Sudan plant cotton, and it appears to grow very well. Good cotton soil, I noticed, is black, and was not always advantageous to us personally in low-lying areas, for if the cars stuck at all they invariably sank down to the axles in the soft black ground.

We just touched the tail end of the Kenya and Uganda rains. We were fortunate in finding rest huts at intervals, and as the evenings drew in we were usually able to reach one. They were spread out at intervals of about thirty miles or so. Sometimes we were caught in a deluge of rain at about four in the afternoon, but we slept dry at night. The road right up to Mongalla was properly made, well drained, with rain-ditches on either side, and raised above the level of the veldt.

In Northern Uganda we saw some interesting dances, and we were lucky in meeting a band of young men who were making the round of the villages to dance. They wore little circular brimless hats, made of brightly hued feathers arranged straight up from a band resting on the top of the head. Their dance did not vary very much from the usual native mode of dancing round in a circle or in rows, but they looked so amusing and attractive in their funny little hats, and rows of rattling nuts round their ankles.

Most of the natives in Uganda and the Sudan are stark

naked, which is, I think, preferable to the sketchy, dirty oddments of clothing worn by many of the Southern Rhodesian natives. The young women are adorned with nothing but a narrow bead girdle round their waists, and the older ones have soft skins wound round their hips. I think their way of carrying their babies not only practical but rather pretty. We prevailed upon a mother to allow us to photograph her and her baby. She did not care to be photographed, but was won over on being presented with some beads. The babies sit on their backs, on a kind of little trapeze strung from the mother's shoulders; a soft leather strap supports the baby's head and passes round the mother's body, and attached to a thin soft strap from the mother's neck is the half of a calabash, curiously—and sometimes beautifully—carved, which completely covers the child's head, and often the whole body. I was so interested in these calabashes that I got a few good specimens and managed to bring them home. It was very hard to resist buying curios from the natives, but we had no space to carry non-essentials, and we could not overburden the cars with extra weight.

Nearing the borders of the Sudan, Kima gave us a bad fright. I noticed that he sat looking dejected and miserable on the mud wall running round the open-sided rest hut where we were having our evening meal, and not taking the slightest notice when his wicked uncles teased him or offered him juicy morsels of stewed fruit, his dream of heaven. He simply sat on, his head down, with a "more in sorrow than in anger" look in his brown eyes. His breathing was difficult, so we guessed it must be pneumonia. I was very alarmed, and it broke my heart to think that he might die. I dosed him with quinine and hot brandy, and rubbed his chest and back with paraffin,

then sewed him into a flannel jacket and kept him warm, and with the assistance of his 'uncle' Glover his life was saved. But Kima was a sad boy for a long time.

On the Sudan border we stopped and reported at a Government station, where we were medically examined for sleeping sickness. A Sudanese doctor ran his fingers up and down the sides of our necks and felt for swollen glands; we were passed as fit, and we were almost amazed to find that we were at last in the Sudan. The road was fairly good for some distance, but became very boggy as we neared Mongalla, on the Nile. We crossed many bridges we thought at first too frail to bear our cars. They are what are known as split-cane bridges, and are in reality very strong, made of plaited cane stretched over a framework of heavy, strong cross-beams supported by stout upright poles. It was an alarming sensation driving over them until we got used to them, for it felt like jumping up and down on a spring mattress.

At Torit we were delayed a day while a bridge was being repaired. We met an officer there who was going out alone with a handful of native troops to quell a small war which was going on somewhere in the interior. My admiration for the British official in those lonely outposts knows no bounds. He is strong and self-reliant. He rules his vast tracts of country so calmly and effectively, and one hears so little about his efforts. I wonder if people at home know just how brave and enduring he is. He does not march with a regiment behind him to quell a rising or subdue a truculent people. He quietly goes out with a handful of native soldiers, fights if necessary, but invariably accomplishes what he sets out to do. He lives cut off from his fellows, and even if he does come to the stage where he prefers being alone, there must be times

when the desire to speak his own tongue is almost unendurable. We met many such men, nearly all of them young, or not yet middle-aged. My heart went out to them all, and I felt mightily proud of them.

We reached Mongalla, in the Sudan, on the 18th of October, 1925, eight days after we left Nairobi, in Kenya, which shows how good the roads were.

Mongalla is a large station on the Nile where steamboats come from the north with goods and mail, and we were told that during the rainy season the place is surrounded by swamp on all sides. We were welcomed by Captain Lawrence, an officer of the Coldstreams serving out there for a time; then the Governor, Major Brock, came, and we had tea with them on Captain Lawrence's cool veranda. The station doctor was away at the time, and we were installed in his house. It was cool and airy, and we enjoyed being able to have baths in a real long bath, instead of our own square canvas ones. The house had long, deep mosquito-proof verandas, where we were able to browse on lots of illustrated papers, and play the doctor's gramophone records, many of which were new to us.

"*October* 18.—We dined with the Governor to-night and heard news of the outside world. It was a touch of civilization being in a real house once more, sitting in comfortable chairs, and getting into touch with people outside our own little party, which we almost begin to feel makes up the entire world. Sticky heat, about 90°. We have come back to have a heavenly night's rest on wide *angarebs*[1] with, for me, the prospect of having breakfast in bed at ten o'clock—rather a change from rising at four in the morning.

[1] An Arab bed laced with plaited fibre.

TRAVELLING THROUGH SWAMP GRASS

" *October* 19.—Dined with Captain Lawrence. Had a peaceful day doing nothing.

" *October* 20.—The river steamer came in this evening. Great activity and excitement—a breath from the world we are almost forgetting. It looked magnificent to our eyes, with lots of people bustling about—mostly people of colour, it is true, and some Egyptians. Kima was taken down to admire the sights and he frankly trembled with excitement, and clucked at some inoffensive hounds strolling by, which caused them to lose their air of dignity and fly. To-day C.T. went out ten miles on the other side of the river to see if it is possible to get the cars through. Anyhow, we are going to try it. The officials all say that we shall never get through the fifty miles of swamp, twenty of which are 'impassable,' and that we ought to send the cars up the river by boat that far, and that if we attempt it we shall have to come back, or that *if* we get through at all it will take at least three weeks. The natives are burning grass in the swamps, and that adds another danger. But we want to do the thing by road to prove what we said, that the *whole* way from Cape to Cairo *could* be done by car, and also, of course, we want to do it for our own personal gratification. Heaven alone knows how we shall get on, but try we shall. I trust C.T. to do it if anybody can.

" *October* 21.—Captain Lawrence came for sundowner, and sent heavenly English bacon, a whole—is it flitch?—of it.

" Mongalla is an important station, but has only four white men, and is a tiny place really, with a few red-roofed bungalows dotted about. It has a court-house, and there are lovely little gravel paths leading to the different houses. The grass is short and thick like a lawn all over the station.

It looks like lawn and more lawn for miles around. Flowers and flowering shrubs are here. There are lots of chattering birds. 'Wild hyenas,' too, prowl about at night, looking for little monkeys tied to veranda railings. I had to rescue Kima last night. The poor man was jolly nearly scotched. You can tell when a hyena is near, because it makes hideous noises and smells worse. Wrote letters all day, and packed my precious *kibuyus*[1] to be sent home. It *is* hot.

"*October* 22.—To-morrow the steamer comes back from Rejaf and our cars go across the Nile to the opposite bank, and we start early on the morning of the 24th on our 'unknown and perilous swamp.'

"*October* 23.—We had an almost too thrilling time getting the cars over, this afternoon. They went over on an iron barge tugged by a river steamboat. Getting them on the barge from the bank was pretty gruelling work. We had dozens of savages, who all insisted on doing everything wrong, and getting their hands and feet hurt with the heavy iron beams they were handling. First the iron beams with one side ridged were laid from bank to boat, and then the cars were very slowly and perilously driven over them on to the flat barge, which was *just* the width of the cars from radiator to tail! This may sound easy, but lordy! Once or twice the jolly things almost slipped off the narrow iron runners, and were very nearly lost to us for ever, with C.T. and Errol sitting in the driving seats. It was the most hair-raising thing in the world to observe that the left front wheel of No. 1 was more over the edge than on it, but eventually we got them safely on and they were tugged over. At the other bank more excitement occurred. Niggers dug the bank away

[1] Swahili for calabash.

to make it slanting, and there was much noise and labour in getting the heavy iron ramps (or whatever they are called) in position again for driving the buses ashore, all the niggers gesticulating and shouting at once. My heart seemed to stand still, for one inch to the right or left and the worst would have happened, but we got them safely landed in a mealie patch. So to-morrow we are off, and they all politely tell us we are mad to attempt it, that we'll *never* do it, and *if* we do it, we shall be weeks and weeks. Well, we must do our job properly, and try it, at any rate. We dined on the steamer to-night. It was rather a magnificent change. The 'chuck-chuck' of the engine and the activity of the barefooted sailors made us feel as if we were going at least to Borneo or Zanzibar. It is really a small affair and only draws two feet of water, but it boasts two tiny decks and some cabins, a menu written in French, and electric light!"

CHAPTER XIII

MONGALLA TO TERRAKEKKA, AND BEYOND

THE day which was to see the beginning of the greatest of our adventures—the journey through the swamps round the Sudd—started with great activity and subdued excitement. We sprang, at dawn, out of our comfortable beds, the last we should have for many a long day, and snatched some food, and rolled up our blankets and the few clothes we possessed. The natives lent to us for the transporting of our kit down to the river came in, each choosing what looked like the lightest load, and bearing it away on his head.

'The Swamps!'—the sound of it was adventure itself. I saw, in my optimistic moments, shallow puddles and a reed or two, and in my pessimistic ones, visions of reeking, steaming, mosquito-infested hells, where we must surely die. We got tastes of both, easy swamp and hellish swamp—but we did not die!

We found the stretch from Mongalla to Terrakekka not as bad as we had expected. It is true that the reeds and grass were above our heads, and we could not see more than a yard or two in front of us. The ground had been water-logged, but it had dried off sufficiently to leave the surface hard enough to bear us. There were a few native villages on the higher-lying ground, but we wondered how human beings could live even there.

We were surprised, after the reports we had heard, that we were able to negotiate the place at all. We made *détours*, dug ourselves out, and chopped our way through

the worst bits, but we did the stretch in fifteen and a half hours. We left the west bank of the Nile at Mongalla at ten in the morning and reached our goal, Terrakekka, at half-past one o'clock next morning.

Driving through the night was agonizing. Mosquitoes settled on us in dark masses; we had to chop our way through thick jungle, and to add to our troubles the second car had no lights, as the batteries had run down; so Julius sat on the back of the first car holding the spotlight by its long cable, flashing it back for the second car. It had the dubious advantage of more or less lighting the road, but at the same time throwing the glare into the face of the unfortunate driver. Fred and Errol took turns at the wheel, and it must have been hard work with not an inch to spare between trees on either side after the first car had squeezed through the small passage cleared for it.

To be forewarned is to be forearmed. My diary records the details of this stage, whose difficulties appeared slight only because they happened to be less than the horrors predicted.

"*October* 25.—Well, we did it all right. We left the west bank of the Nile at 10 A.M. and reached Terrakekka, about fifty to seventy miles from Mongalla, where we got on to the road again. We arrived dog-tired, of course. It meant driving at a snail's pace all the way through the reeds and grass above our heads, and we had to get native guides to run ahead from swampy village to swampy village. We had axle trouble and a slipping clutch, which delayed us in all about three hours. At six in the evening we were taken the wrong way by two lazy devils who, instead of leading us to the big road, which was about four or six miles off, led us to another village, nearer than the road would have been, where they knew two other

'nakeds' would have to take us on. This unfortunate affair cost us a lot of time, but we had an Askari accompanying us, lent by the Governor at Mongalla, so it was a fairly easy matter to get the niggers to do as they were told. But I should like to kick those two who let us down. We were unfortunate, too, in that it rained steadily from 6 P.M until we arrived at Terrakekka. At ten o'clock we stopped to fill our radiators, which were red-hot, and also to clean the magneto. Owing to the deluge the ground was a sheet of water, and some petrol had probably overflowed from the carburettor and formed a film on the water, for when some one accidentally threw a lighted match out six feet from the car, there was a sudden blaze. Flames leapt up to the car, and seemed to come from all over the bonnet. In a flash we were out, tearing up earth and sand with our hands, and madly hurling it on to the blazing car. It is extraordinary how a thousand thoughts crowd into your mind in one fierce moment when all your energies are centred in one channel. I realized what it would mean to lose our car, and not only the car but all the cameras, our bedding, the rifles and cartridges, and ten thousand feet of cinematograph film. Then there was Kima to be rescued; he was tied up on to the side of the car, and all the while—even if it *was* moments—the car blazed. We tore our fingers and nails in our frenzied efforts to keep the flames down, and C.T. was busy getting the fire-extinguisher out from where it always stood by the driver's seat. We yelled: 'Fire-extinguisher!' C.T. answered: 'For heaven's sake, yes—I'm wrenching the top off, it won't unscrew, and the other one's empty!' In a second, which seemed like ages, he came and poured the stuff on to the flames, which by this time lit up the forest, and then the fire sank and sighed out like a pricked

NIAM NIAM LUNATIC

balloon. The job had been done quickly, but we were all rather shaken by the accident, and I felt nervy for hours afterward.

" The rain came down again and it was a nightmare night. We were driving through dense woods, and the monkey-ropes and undergrowth looked alarming in the dark, with the car light alone to show them up. We took what seemed like hairpin bends, and the step of the car was wrenched off by a stump, and our starting handle was grotesquely bent by one we simply didn't see. We drove straight into it. The second car had no lights at all, and it could only creep behind us and trust to God and a feeble light from the first car. We crashed continually into overarching branches, which had to be chopped down before we could move, and we squeezed through trees and undergrowth with only an inch to spare on either side, the second car hugging us close. Then we'd find that we could not move over an obstruction in front of our wheel. The heat was awful and I've never seen so many mosquitoes in my life. They stung us all, and me to faintness. They settled on our knees and arms in solid blocks. I think it must be the world's worst place for them. They simply chewed us up. Trying to escape them, I even crept under the bucksail covering the back of the car, but I gave it up, because I found that the pots and pans and other paraphernalia there dug me too badly in the ribs with the jolting of the car. Lord, it was Hell. And I was feeling so darned ill and jumpy too. I could only keep silence, and help when I could. All we could do was to crawl along, and then wait while the boys cut a way through. We had this relief, though, that after a few hundred yards, we'd get a comparatively clear space of tall grass and short bush, where we could breathe

again before getting into the next belt of suffocating trees and overhanging green things, with their attendant myriads of mosquitoes and dead sticky heat. Pray God we shall never have to spend another hellish night like that. People could never be told about this kind of thing. They could not be expected to feel one tiny pang of it, nor understand.

"But we got through in a day, and the suffering of last night has all gone. We are very bucked. The ground was swampy, but we were guided round the worst bits, and I believe a road could be made through it. We simply had to push through last night; otherwise we might have been caught in there, and unable to get out for weeks. We are on the road now, and the next hundred miles are better, we hear. The ground in the Sudan seems to dry quicker than that in Rhodesia. Our route round the Sudd lies through Amadi, Meridi, Mvolo, Gnopp Post, Atwot Post, Rumbek, Bahr el Gell, Tonj, Aweil, Chel river, Nyamlell, Malau, Bahr el Arab, Abu Matarik, Abu Gabra, Muglad, Abu Zabad, into El Obeid.

"Feel groggy to-day, but am determined to be 'strong and silent'!

"The bodies of the people we meet are covered with scarifications, the designs of which are sometimes very intricate and beautiful. They have designs of flowers and great fronds of fern on their backs and chests. Some of them have markings right round their bodies in the form of corsets, and we saw how these markings were made. They cut the skin into the desired design, then wood ash is inserted and kept there until a scar is made. It is amazing that these people do not die of blood-poisoning, for many of them during this process have horrible-looking festering sores, and flies settle on them in masses. They do not trace the whole design at once,

ERROL DRINKS !

but do a few inches at a time, until the whole thing is completed. I must confess that the finished article is in some cases very effective.

"*October* 26.—Did fifty-nine miles of made road yesterday. Left Terrakekka at three and camped at six. Road good. Rest houses at intervals all the way along. Temperature steadily going up. It was 100° at one o'clock this morning.

"Kima espied a buck in the road a few moments ago, and chattered until we noticed it. It is amazing how he spots game in the bush long before we see it. He jabbers and bounds about with excitement when he sees anything, especially monkeys."

In London we took Kima to a private view of our film, expecting that he would curl up in my lap and go to sleep as he usually does when he is bored. But not a bit of it —Kima was so interested that he almost went mad with joy. I am sure he knew the old cars when they came into the picture by the way he leaned forward and stared. He knew the game beyond a shadow of doubt, for when a giraffe or buck appeared on the screen he clucked and jabbered and was thrilled to the marrow. When the picture moved on and no game appeared, Kima was silent. It was very remarkable, and there is no doubt whatever that he recognized it. He loves turning the pages of a book, and if we show him a fairly large-sized picture of game he knows it at once, shoots his chin forward, and hurls a flow of words at it.

". . . Heaps of hyena in this country. One sniffed round us near our beds all night. C.T. and Errol doing the cars this morning. No. 1 not running well. Did only sixty miles yesterday. It is going to be a snorting hot day to-day. Millions of mosquitoes. The natives here wear

bunches of green leaves in front and behind. Some wear a kind of girdle made of small round nuts."

We were now in the Bahr-el-Ghazal province, which is larger than the British Isles. In spite of the difficulties we liked the Sudan, and life became very interesting for us. There was a lot of hard work to be done in digging the cars out of thick black clay, and negotiating the swamps; and there were many rivers, some of which were swift and deep, with granite rocks sloping down to the banks; others were bordered by trees or long grassy reeds. The southern part rather reminded us of Rhodesia; the formation of the ground looked similar, with the difference that a rough road ran through the Niam Niam cornfields in the midst of which stood the natives' huts. The people stood by the roadside as we passed, wearing nothing but a bunch of young green leaves.

The Niam Niam women dress their hair into tiny plaits all round their heads, which gives them a bobbed appearance, and some of them thread red or other coloured beads into their hair, in a circle, with perhaps a row down the centre as well.

The name 'Niam Niam' was given by the northern people to certain tribes dwelling in the southern Bahr-el-Ghazal, who were conquered and absorbed by the Zande about two hundred years ago. It is not certain what 'Niam Niam' actually means, but it is thought that it was applied in fear and derision to these southern folk who had leanings toward cannibalism, and *niam niam* certainly sounds rather like the smacking of lips! It is interesting to note that in Swahili, a kind of lingua franca of Kenya, the word *nyama* means 'meat.'

We liked the Niam Niam. They seemed a cheery

SEEING A WHITE WOMAN FOR THE FIRST TIME 183

crowd. In several parts they had never seen a white woman, and when they discovered that the 'little boy' in a pair of shorts and a shirt was a woman, they became frenzied with excitement. It was disconcerting and often frightening to be the centre of such marked attention, and when at night they crowded round us, excitedly talking and pointing, I tried to make my voice deep and gruff, hoping that they would mistake me for a boy—for I had nasty visions of myself being stolen and kept as a kind of National Museum piece, or worse.

The track was very bad in the Niam Niam country, the ground swampy, and we had hard work getting the cars through. We would start off in the mornings, battle along all day, decide to camp at dusk, then by that time find ourselves in a nasty little swamp with heavy rain-clouds banking up overhead. That meant pushing on somehow until higher or drier ground could be reached; for if rain overtook us in those bogs we might have been delayed for days or weeks. Finding natives to help us, then getting out and on a few miles, sometimes took us until four or five o'clock the next morning.

The rest huts in the Sudan are a perfect godsend. They are rough shelters made of mud and thatched with grass. We simply threw our mattresses down in them and flopped with exhaustion, sank into heavy sleep for a few hours, then set off to encounter the same kind of thing again.

"*October* 29.—We left the last place yesterday morning at about ten and travelled all day and all night, and reached this place in the Bahr-el-Ghazal province, seventy miles off, at 4.30 this morning. This sounds quite ordinary though perhaps a long drive—from ten o'clock one day to four o'clock the next. But let me tell you, Diary, it was

enough. We halted at a rest hut at 5.30 yesterday afternoon, and thought it best to go on for an hour more and try to hit another shelter. The rain came down in gallons at six o'clock, and made the already soggy ground like a kid's mud puddle. We simply had to push on to shelter of some kind, as our tarpaulins are only two and they cover the kit on the cars. We cannot sleep on ground that is like a full sponge and running like a river in places, because we have no camp beds, only thin kapok mattresses. It would have meant, if we had not pushed on, sitting in the cars all night, and perhaps sticking for days and days in the mud. So we kept on, digging ourselves out, hauling on block and tackle with the help of savages, of whom, thank heaven, just here there are thousands, and generally wearing ourselves out getting the cars to budge out of some of the rottenest mud on earth (although it wasn't by a long shot as bad as the Rhodesian mud). It was so heartbreaking moving only a hundred yards and sticking again, for all the world as if we were back in the rain days of Southern Rhodesia. I think I've never felt quite as heartsick and tired as I did last night. Every one at home seemed to be so far away and dead to one's suffering. It seemed that we were doomed to go on enduring, enduring, all our lives, and nobody would care one damn if we did. I hate self-pity but, hang it all, there are limits, and it isn't easy to be a woman and go through some of the things that I seem continually to have to endure. But it's dashed weak of me even to think of these things. Anyhow I try not to let the others know that I feel like passing away at times. It's no use having miseries, so I'll just forget about it and write about the interesting things.

" Yesterday we drove through the most fertile country

I've ever seen. The natives seem to have the healthiest maize and corn crops, and there were miles upon miles of them all along the road, and dozens of little villages dotted among them. From Meridi we travelled through the country of the Gibelao people. This is the generic name for several of these Nilotic tribes. Our next station is Mvolo, about fifty miles farther north. We came across a poor lunatic who was shackled with heavy wooden logs to prevent him doing damage to himself or others.

" Such a tremendous sensation am I these days! I'm a kind of rare specimen, never seen by these people before —a white woman. The natives just simply and frankly stare, and discuss me at very close range, with gasps of '*Ooah! Huh, huh, huh!*' and other unintelligible sounds. It was rather quaint last night when we noticed that after quite a long while the women began to peer into the car and look around as if they were looking for something. They jabbered in their language, which sounds like a succession of *r-r-r-r*'s, very loud and abrupt. They put their heads within inches of mine and looked and looked in the most bewildered way, and when I got out of the car they still didn't seem to realize that I was the owner of the unmistakable feminine voice they had heard inside the car. Then some time afterward, from the seat by the steering wheel, I gave the most inquisitive of the girls a cigarette, and laughed. Whereupon she discovered me. It was very curious to be regarded with such interest and amazement. They simply 'fell' upon me, with cries of astonishment. The only thing I could understand was a word which sounded something like *dédé* (woman). They pointed at me, and then at themselves, and said: '*Dédé—dédé?*' Some of them flew off to the village and brought other women, all jabbering like mad. The men

also displayed interest, but were shooed off. Of course my being dressed exactly like the men and my hair short was what fooled them for quite a long time.

" When the excitement died down the chief came to C.T. and asked him to wait at his village for a month, while he sent round to all the neighbouring villagers to come in and enjoy this marvel. It is not necessary to say that I strongly upheld C.T.'s polite refusal.

" We got to a rest hut at 4.30 A.M. to-day, and tumbled straight into bed. After the toil of the day and all the long filthy night it was like going plump into heaven.

" We rested until twelve noon, but could not go on because of a hard soaking rain, which simply dishes the road until the sun shines on it in all its powerful glory—and the Lord knows how powerful that is.

" The women in this part of the world also wear the quaint front and back covering of leaves. They carry their babies supported by a kind of basket belt, and their hair is done in tiny plaits which encircle their heads above the forehead. Others have plaits which run down to the nape of the neck in straight lines, and it is rather pretty. The plaits continue for an inch away from the neck, curling outward. Their faces are growing less negroid-looking the farther north we go.

" We had arranged that in any emergency during the journey the first person to awake should press the button and sound one long blast on the motor-horn. Suddenly, last night, the horn went off in one long blast. Every one jumped up and seized their rifles. The dogs barked. All the natives came running from the village, the women screaming, the men with spears; and the only reason for the commotion was that the rain had got into and short-circuited the horn!

"To-day we did the grand total of eight miles. More rain, and the mud was just as positively damnable as mud knows how to be. We had niggers pulling on the block and tackle, of course. We travelled twelve and a half hours. I am getting some of the dear little calabashes the natives have. They are only as big as half a fist and they wear them on their belts. They contain fat for rubbing into their hair or bodies.

"We have a new boy called Beam—or so it is pronounced. He is quaint, and Kima scares him to death by clasping him whenever he passes near enough. They are becoming by degrees quite good friends though. The nigs. grow more amazed at me. G. went out for a walk last evening and had to push a hefty man into the mud for dashing out of the bush and grabbing him by the shoulders, excitedly jabbering something at him, and trying to walk him off the road. The word must have gone forward that a white woman was with the expedition, and he thought that G. was me. Thank God I was safe in camp.

"*October* 30.—It *is* raining to-night!

"These people wear dog's teeth round their necks. They believe that if they wear the teeth of their deceased hounds they will escape disease. There are literally thousands of Niam Niam dogs in this country. I believe they are recognized by the Kennel Club as a pure breed. Funny little chaps. Their coat is a kind of yellow and raw sienna, with white blobs in various places. They are about a foot and a quarter high, with pointed ears, and tails curled on to their backs. Their hair is short, and they are very active and 'busy.' I don't believe they are bred for the pot; anyway, I am not *really* consumed with anxiety to sample the goodly dish.

"*October* 31.—Didn't do much to-day—twenty miles. We stuck, stuck, and restuck. This 'non-rainy' season is 'the bunk'! We simply sat in the sun and roasted. Well, by that I don't really mean sat, for we worked like fury to get the bogged cars out. We struck a bad patch where there were no natives, and we sent the merry Beam off, complete with shotgun, to go and fetch some boys from the villages we passed earlier in the morning. He was away six hours, and we think he went off into a heavy drowse under a tree, but he said that when he got there the men were all away in the fields. However, while he was away, by lucky chance we found two boys strolling along the road, and sent them back, in the opposite direction to which Beam had gone, to find others. We were really lucky, for in half an hour about thirty were found and brought back, whereupon we got them on to the block and tackle, just as old Sunbeam came strolling back with some fellow-cutthroats, who were by this time obviously unnecessary. We reached this native village twenty minutes afterward and are the guests of a little head-man, who came out to meet us all dolled up in shorts and a topee. We have nice new huts to sleep in, and the ground round them has been cleared and stamped down until it is hard. We have a big fire, and in the bush somewhere there is singing, and drums sounding, and now I'm going to sleep.

"*November* 1.—Same kind of thing as yesterday. Did eight miles all day. We started out at seven in the morning and camped at six in the evening. Lord, this is really beginning to look like Rhodesia. It can't last, surely? Gosh and goodness, we've had enough mud to last us for ever.

"*November* 2.—We had another filthy day to-day.

CROSSING THE NAAM ON AN IMPROVISED RAFT

We simply had to wait until we could build a kind of bridge across a small swamp, so wasted seven hours and stewed in the heat. G. got stung by a fierce wasp which flew up the leg of his shorts. The poor man shot out of the car in a flash and grappled with the beast. He frightened Julius out of a doze on the back of the car by howling: 'I've been stung by a wasp, Julius!' Poor Julius, half asleep, replied in a high startled falsetto: 'Is it?'

"*November* 3.—To-day we reached and crossed the Naam river. The Governor of Mongalla province sent an order to the *mamur*[1] at Rumbek to gather together fifty natives and send them up to await our arrival here. We duly met them, in charge of an Askari, and they dragged the cars across the river. Getting them on to the opposite bank was a hard job. The engines had to be fixed first, the carburettors and instruments were taken off, then we slid in to the rapid old river. The water came up right above the floor boards, and almost up to the seats on which we were sitting. G. took a cine. picture of the crossing. He also got a picture of a croc. asleep on a rock. We went up in a canoe, he and I, and got quite close, although not as close as G. wished. When we walked along the bank to get a close-up of him, the croc. quietly slipped into the water.

"Mosquitoes are like hippos here. Oh, Lord, the heat is filthy—very damp. It is going to rain. We shan't be able to go off until late to-morrow, as the engines must drain off. C.T. and G. fished to-day. Got some big aigle.

"*November* 4.—We haven't been able to move to-day. It rained heavily and the country is swamped. It left off

[1] Native official.

during the afternoon, and we fished at a lovely spot, with huge grey rocks running right down into the water. Hundreds of rabbits run about on them, and grey apes peer at you out of the trees. Fish took my line, bait and all, on three occasions, but then I had only ordinary string at first. On the third shot I used the posh rod and silk line, which were lent to me very reluctantly, as they believe that I 'ain't worthy,' not being a real fisherman. I was unfortunate enough to lose their best float, but I'll tell you that these fish are wild, and I'll defy the smartest fisherman to escape without accident. Between us we lost six hooks and five of our best lines. Anyhow I got the biggest fish of all, and that made them mad, even if I didn't land him. He simply broke the line and swallowed the hook.

"There are about four chiefs here welcoming us. The custom of the Sudan, round here at any rate, is to shake hands with them. They are gentlemen, and we like them. They all seem to be young men, and I suppose the Government considers it a good thing to give the young men preference over the old ones who used to spill knives a few years ago—only three, I think.

"*November* 5.—We had a sweet time to-day, sticking from 12.30 until 10 P.M. While we were trying to get out a kind of young cloudburst happened and ruined us for good. We got boys from a village four miles off, and they worked at the block and tackle until we got out, an inch at a time. We are utterly tired and weary.

"Now, even the country looks like rainy Southern Rhodesia. The trees are the same, and there are no high hills. But in spite of the sameness it is really quite different. We saw four packs of giant baboons sitting in the road, and they didn't appear to be much afraid of the

SAFELY ACROSS

cars. Heavens, I'd loathe to be attacked by one of these brutes. Some of them had babies clutching on to their backs and tummies.

"We met a European doctor to-day who is trekking hundreds of miles to get in touch with a Nile steamer, and I asked him to examine me for sleeping-sickness glands in my neck. I thought by the swelling that I must have it. But thank goodness the swollen glands are not caused by sleeping sickness. He is very ill, and is going home on sick-leave. The road which he should have followed is impassable because of the rains; it is all swamp, and the carriers cannot go through it, so he must go a hundred miles out of his way—not easy for a sick man.

CHAPTER XIV

BEYOND TERRAKEKKA TO AWEIL

WE were now really in 'the swamps'—and the rivers, with the Dinkas, the crocodiles, the mosquitoes, and the deathly steamy heat. There were days when it was at least 116° in the shade, that damp heat which is always worse to bear than dry heat.

We met various branches of the Dinka tribes, among which were the Jur, the Atwot, and the Nuer. The Dinkas are an emotional and temperamental people. Their mood changes from smiles to sudden gusts of rage, and we never quite knew what they would do next. It required great firmness and tact to deal with them, for they are like small children; one minute, for no apparent reason, they are intensely pleased about things, and the next they are on the point of thrusting their spears into you.

They were very interested in the spot-light mirror, and would gather round it, smiling, making faces at themselves, and bursting into hilarious laughter. The women discovered that I had a bottle of eau-de-Cologne, and my time was fully occupied in sprinkling a few drops on to their hands, which they smeared on their hair.

The married women wore soft skin aprons, and the young girls nothing but a fine girdle of bark or beads. The men wore nothing in the form of clothes, but they had more ornaments than the women, some of which were very striking. Their collars of large blue beads

A CHARACTERISTIC DINKA ATTITUDE

came down to the shoulders, with two lines of white running down the centre. Round their waists were more beads of the same colour, made into the shape of short stays. Sometimes the colour of the beads was rose, but we noticed that bright blue was the colour most in favour, and on their arms above the elbows were huge ivory bangles, about four or five inches wide. To secure these bangles tightly to their arms they use a strange-looking red paste; and over some of them were coverings of thin hide to preserve them and prevent their cracking. I should have liked to have bought some, but as these people do not use money it was impossible to secure them. They were willing to take two cows in exchange for one, but as I had no cows concealed about my person the negotiations ended there. Cattle is the beginning and end of their interest in life; and they have vast herds.

Among a crowd of perhaps a hundred men you would see twenty or thirty of them with heavy iron bangles, graduating up from the wrist to the elbow. I asked Beam to inquire why certain of the men wore these tight, heavy bracelets. They were amused at the funny, tiny white woman asking this simple question; and a man called others wearing the same bangles to come up and form a line in front of me, and they thus gave me a practical demonstration of their use. They held up their iron-clad arms, and with their spears in their right hands played on them a most fascinating rhythm, while the other Dinkas stamped their feet. It was so infectious that I found myself doing it too. They told us that they were part of the chief's 'band.' They were very proud of the honour, in spite of the awful weight and discomfort of those musical instruments encircling their arms. We

often saw them holding their tired limbs above their heads; it was a kind of rest for them, I suppose.

The Dinkas are huge people, some of them being six feet high, some even taller. The men sleep, as a rule, in the ashes of their fires, and we saw men herding cattle whose whole bodies were smeared with ash. We were told that this was to keep off cattle flies, and other stinging insects. The effect was startling; they looked like ghosts. The men shave their heads, as a rule, but some of them let their hair grow, and bolster it up with grease, clay, or other substances, into a thick mat. They would stand about in large groups of forty or fifty, occasionally on one leg, the other foot resting on the knee; and a few of them wore queer little pointed grass hats, rather reminding me of the pointed hats of the gnomes of Perrault's fairy tales.

Their little round huts are usually built off the ground on posts. I suppose they acquired the habit of building them in this way because they dwelt in the vicinity of swamps and dangerous animals.

The labour of getting the cars pulled through the miles of swamps bordering the rivers was indescribable. At the rivers, makeshift rafts had to be made with tree trunks, or perhaps a couple of fairly large canoes lashed together, with platforms of poles laid across: then we would get to more swamps, and rivers where there were no possible means of crossing—rivers ten to twenty feet deep, where on neither bank was there timber of any kind, only reeds and swamp grass.

C.T. stood firm as a rock, as always, and he would admit no insuperable obstacles. He quietly found ways and means, and just as quietly carried them out. He would astonish me with a remark such as this: "Oh, we shall get the cars through all right. I'm going to drag 'em

A FERRY OF TWO CANOES LASHED TOGETHER

through under water, on the bed of the river "—just like that; and away he would go with his inseparable Errol and make arrangements with the nearest man in authority for native labour to help us on the way.

The first of these subaqueous crossings lives in my memory. We gathered together scores of reluctant Dinkas; we made them lay cut grass, foot by foot, over the hot stinking swamp, which sometimes had a scum on it, until a kind of springy cushion of grass was formed, over which the cars could be dragged. We stumbled on, and myriads of flies and stinging things flew up out of the horror underfoot. We had nothing but grass to work with, and we longed for logs, or something firm with which to corduroy. The grass was not sufficiently firm to hold up the cars, and they constantly slithered into the oozy mud beneath. Every few yards we had to stop to strip big bunches of grass off the front where the dumb-irons had dug down below the grass and pitchforked it back on to the cars. It took us nearly all day to get through this, the engines continually in bottom gear, making my ears and nerves buzz, natives pulling, the heat and stench choking us.

Then the river was reached, the Bahr el Gell, and the next thing to be done was to get our kit over on a native dug-out canoe, very small, leaky, and frail. It was a long job, in that evil-smelling locality, with the added difficulty of sudden tropical thunderstorms bursting upon us at intervals. This other bank of the river which was to be the scene of our first desperate experiment was fairly dry, and we were able to find a place in which to sleep that night. I had horrid nightmares of drowning men, and in a semi-dreaming state I saw our cars rolling over and over in the swollen river, being washed away from us,

leaving us stuck in that pestilential reeking swamp for ever, with mad mosquitoes and gloating gnats to bite us. They must have been fierce that night, for when we got up in the morning we had big lumps all over us.

We went down, back to the river, early next morning. C.T., Errol, and Julius removed the carburettor, magneto, dynamo, and all the instruments from the car, made wooden plugs, and, with the help of candle-ends, hermetically sealed every possible opening where the water could get in while the car was at the bottom of the river. Later on, however, this plan was found to be inexpedient, owing to the immense pressure when the car was under water. So afterward all the openings were simply covered with three or four pieces of cloth, to keep the sand out.

Our rope, which was attached to the car to pull it through, was too heavy for the boys to swim across with its whole length. It consisted of two wire cables and a hemp rope, by this time very unreliable through exposure to rain and sun. Had the rope broken while the car was in the middle of the river it would have sunk, and we might not have been able to find it again. C.T. therefore had a petrol tin tied to the end of the steel cable where it joined the hemp rope, so that we could see, in the case of a break, where the end was. As it happened it did break, and if he had not thought of this we might never have found the car again.

Now the great moment arrived—the car was about to take her header into the river, which was about twenty feet deep. We were all ready, each with something to do: C.T. in the car to steer her as long as he could, Errol and Julius to help C.T. on the near side, and we others on the opposite bank to keep the Dinkas at the rope, and take C.T.'s orders as he shouted them over to us.

CAR ENTERING THE BAHR EL GELL

Then on the old bus came, foot by foot, C.T. sitting inside, and my heart was almost bursting at the thought of the danger to him. The steering apparatus had been lashed with rope, but he had given it just a little play, allowing the wheels a certain amount of movement, but not enough for the car to be swept completely round by the current. The car moved a little farther down the shelving bank we had made, the boys pulling slowly and steadily, then plonk! down she dived, nose first, plunging into and under water, taking C.T. with her. Luckily he had foreseen this possibility, and had kept one hand on the back of the hood. On going under he jerked himself clear of the car, and appeared on the surface.

When the car went in, the heavy engine over the front wheels was enough to keep the front down, but the petrol tank behind, being sealed, acted as a float, and the rear of the car was partially buoyant. C.T. stood on that part, and yelled and banged his fist at the Dinkas to hold on for all they were worth to the tail-board, and not swim away, as she was still partly on the shelving bank, and there was yet a chance of holding her from washing down-stream. The rope had snapped in the middle of the river, but the natives from our side were able to swim to the broken end where the petrol tin had been tied, and they gradually came back, nearing our bank with it. The Dinkas being too feckless to be trusted to tie a reliable knot, Julius and Errol swam out and mended the break. It is a good thing that they were good swimmers, for the river was deep and swift, and it is not an easy matter joining up a broken rope in these crocodile-infested waters. There was some fuss about crocs., but with so many natives yelling and splashing at once there was not so very much danger from them.

Then slowly the car was hauled along, C.T. swimming about looking for her, but the water was so muddy that we could not see the bottom, or any sign of her. There were rocks and holes and clay, but we had to risk things.

Although the actual time from the moment the car went in to her reappearance was only minutes, to us who were concerned it seemed never-ending. Presently C.T. saw bubbles coming from the water, swam toward them, and we suddenly saw the car emerge. He seized her, climbed the side, and steered hard with his feet toward the sloping bank he had previously picked, where the boys were pulling, until she came out high enough for him to hold the wheel with his hand. Then suddenly she dropped into a farther depression or channel, and at the same time washed down-stream. The natives yelled and screamed, and could not be stopped from pulling the car smack into a vertical bank of soft clay; and there she was, under water, with just an inch of the top of the hood showing, well embedded in the clay bank.

The boys went on strike and refused to go in again. They said, "crocodiles," and C.T. and the others had to do the job unaided. They did three hours' diving, until they were practically exhausted. By that time, handful by handful, they had scraped the clay away from the front wheels, and were too done up to do any more diving. However, it was growing late, and the car could not be left there all night. The boys were told to go on the bank up-stream as far as possible, and to haul her sideways, mud and all. Why she did not break in two I do not know, but gradually she came up to the sloping bank, and was then hauled out, with much shouting and cries of victory from the natives.

The second car went through the same process, except

CAR DISAPPEARING IN THE BAHR EL GELL

that this time every part of the engine and petrol tanks were filled with water at the outset, so as to keep her down on the river-bed. This time C.T. stayed on the top of the car, so that when she plunged he could get free more easily, and Mr Glover secured a fine cinematograph record of the adventure.

It was done—victory indeed! We had risked all, rather than abandon the expedition after we had gone through so much, such hardships, such sickening days, and nights of work and lack of rest—days and nights when our bodies were so weary that we had almost ceased to feel. We could not have come so far in vain; it would have been too much. But we knew now that we could get through the rivers. There remained the swamps, of course, but we hoped to get through those too.

The method of getting the water out of the engine on the other side of the river was first to take out all such things as plugs and compression cocks, then allow it to drain; then to put her in bottom gear, and get the natives to run, pushing and pulling her along, so that the engine whirled round and pumped the water out.

A corpulent and dignified Sudanese *mamur*, with many wives, came down from a little village to see our first crossing. When he saw the car emerge he became wild with excitement, tore off his snowy outer garment, his head-dress and a few other things, got hold of the rope, and between pants howled: "Victory! The wonderful deed!—my master!" and similar phrases. He was "astonished," he could not believe his eyes.

We found little fishes in the tool-boxes of the cars. Very likely there were fish in the engines themselves.

Then came the task of putting the engines together again, and retiming them; but the two artists at the job

became so expert that, after crossing rivers like this, we were able to get on the road again within about two and a half hours. In about seventeen days we crossed six rivers in this way.

On the 14th of November we reached Wau. The Acting Governor met us and made us very welcome and happy, and we stayed there a few days while the cars were overhauled and Mr Glover went up the river to do some photography.

The natives here also wore their hair in little plaits, and in their hair were beads, often worked into quite good designs, and the men sometimes had a cock's feather stuck rakishly into it. The young girls wore sticks in their lips to keep holes open for their future husbands' gifts of little brass or silver rings. If a girl has not a sufficient number of holes properly to display his wealth she has little chance of getting a well-to-do husband.

We learned that we had only just got through Rumbek, our last station, in time, as there had been a small native war a few days after we passed. The Nuers had raided the Dinkas, their hereditary enemies, and after a lengthy scrap, which in the usual way consisted mostly of the shouting of insults, a few Dinkas were killed, and the Nuers retired, carrying off a lot of Dinka cattle and some Dinka women. We heard a story, which I hardly believe, that among the women was a particularly beautiful girl. Six of the young Nuer bloods coveted this prize, and were continually quarrelling and coming to blows over her, but the Nuer chief soon settled the dissension by the simple method of killing the girl and cutting her into six pieces.

The origin of the war was rather obscure, but apparently, while the Nuer chief was taking his ease, a

YOUNG GIRLS WITH STICKS IN THEIR NOSES AND LIPS

tremendous storm came up, and a thunderbolt fell close by him. He immediately came to the conclusion that it must be "the evil work of those accursed Dinkas." Hence the attack. I suppose, from his point of view, it was a perfectly sound reason.

After more struggles with rivers we reached Aweil on the 22nd of November, and here we met some officers who gave us a great deal of valuable information concerning the natives and the country. One queer custom of the Red Dinkas, the people inhabiting the district to the Bahr el Arab, concerns the burial of their chiefs. The version of the tale as I heard it is that it is considered bad form for a chief to die in his bed, so when he feels that he is going to die he has a large square hole made in the ground. In this is put a bed and a goat. He then calls his people to him and says good-bye, takes one little slave-boy, and with him goes down into the Death Chamber and never returns. Then the people build logs of wood over the top, and pile earth upon it, and so completely bury man, slave, and goat. The grave resembles an enormous ant-hill when it is done. Trees grow on it, and it is very difficult to distinguish it from a real ant-hill. It is a horrible custom, and the Government is trying to abolish it.

We came to the Loll river at Nyamlell. It is a silky expanse of silver, with dark patches of grey rock jutting out of it, and I can still see the Dinkas, about two hundred of them, grouped on the shallow bank, with their ivory and metal bangles and spears glistening in the morning sunlight, and hear the ceaseless chatter as they crowded round us, discussing the loads to be carried over, and, to them, the strange articles of our kit. There were women there in soft skins, naked young girls, and babies, all of them

examining and staring at me. The young chief brought his aged, toothless mother to me to shake hands, and she asked for sugar.

Little canoes were beached on the sand, and others came gllding in, punted by tall men with their spears. At the place where we crossed the river was shallow, three feet at its deepest, and about a hundred yards wide. There had been a soft cooling rain during the night which had made the earth and grass smell sweet. Swallows skimmed over the surface of the water, and little frogs croaked in the green reeds by the water's edge. Then the magnificently made men took up their loads on their heads, and in a long line swung out into the river, winding and curving snakelike to the other side.

DINKA WITH BEAD COLLAR AND IVORY BANGLE 202

CHAPTER XV

THE BAHR EL ARAB

WE had been warned at Aweil, our last lone Government station, that the Red Dinkas near the Bahr [1] el Arab were a nasty crowd, and that the chief, Nuan Atojian, was a treacherous man; and C.T. had been advised to treat him with care and firmness. A short time before there had been trouble with them, and the Government did not trust Nuan Atojian and his people very far.

They were a surly tribe, and I wondered what would be their attitude toward us. There was no known way for our cars across the Bahr el Arab. It was suggested that there might perhaps be a passable way over it at a place called Safaha, but the river was high, and the *toich* [2] all along both banks was miles wide.

We made our way to Malau, Nuan Atojian's stronghold, and C.T. held a long palaver with the evil-looking old chief. I felt that he did not wish to have anything to do with us, and that he was trying to get rid of us, or else give his men an opportunity to jab spears into our backs. He had had orders from Aweil to send some of his Dinkas to the Bahr el Arab to help us, but this he refused to do. All the interpreters talked at once, and in the pandemonium it was hard to get any sense out of the chief, but we managed to get a guide to take us through by the bush track to Safaha, where, Nuan said, there was a crossing, and we should find boys.

[1] River. [2] Swamp.

The language problem added to our difficulties, for none of us knew Dinka. We had a boy who could speak Arabic, and among the Dinkas there were generally one or two who knew Arabic. C.T. gave orders to Julius in English, Julius passed it on in Swahili to Musa, from him it went in Arabic to a Dinka who knew that language, from him to others who knew only Dinka. The answers to our questions had to come all the way back through these channels, so it is not to be wondered at that they were sometimes hardly applicable.

We had a bad time the next day. We got to within four miles of the Bahr el Arab, then found deep swamp, with no possible chance of getting through it. C.T. and Fred waded down to the river. It took them four hours to wade through the swamp, and when they reached the river they found that there were vertical banks, with a sheer drop, and the water twenty feet deep below. There were no natives to help us and we had perforce to make our way back to the village, fifty miles away, to ask the chief in no measured terms what he meant by sending us on such a wild-goose chase.

We knew now that he had had no intention of helping us; in fact, the guide he had given us told us that there was another way, but he refused to say where it was, and said that if the chief did tell us it would, in any case, mean chopping a path through the bush to get to the crossing. We camped that night on the forest path leading back to the village, feeling furious. The chief was obviously unfriendly, and we could see that we were likely to have trouble. I felt nervous, for one can never really tell what natives are thinking.

The next day at noon we got back to Malau. Nuan was rude, and also said that he did not know that that

part of the river was impassable, that he had told his people to go and help us, but that they were "very tired," and also that most of them were away.

C.T. talked to him, and skilfully interlarded his harangue with mentions of "Government" and "awful punishments." At first the chief simply refused to listen to anything, but eventually he was induced to send some men out to cut a path for us, and show us an easier crossing. First, however, he went out into the bush with some of his chief men and performed some kind of rite. We inquired what it was, and were told that he had gone "to put medicine" on the road, and that it is the custom for a chief to do this before the men go out on a new venture. The idea is that if this ceremony is performed the men will be safeguarded against trouble.

We did not believe that Nuan Atojian would keep his word and send men very far, so the next morning C.T. enticed him to ride on the car. We knew if we had the chief, the people would automatically follow; so we kept a sharp eye on him, progressing slowly, creeping along behind the boys who were chopping a path.

The chief's young wife was rather a heart-breaker, and extremely vain. She possessed a robe, a long loose affair of pink brocaded silk in the Arab style, presented to her by the Native Commissioner as a gift from the British Government. She wore a beaded ring through her lip, and spoke rather coquettishly. She came with her women and formally requested to be taken on the car as she had got a thorn in her foot "through walking." It suited us admirably to have her with us as well as the chief. There was much shaking of hands, or rather pressing of fingers, as is the custom, but it was not always

a pleasant experience getting into such close contact with those unwashed cutthroats.

We got into country marked "Uninhabited—unsurveyed," but a path was supposed to exist; and we had heard of a road which the natives called "the road of the Arabs." We reckoned from the map that it must be about eighty-five miles to Sala—the place where this mythical road of the Arabs was supposed to cross the Bahr el Arab.

We had been driven insane at night by the stings of millions of minute flies, which burned like hot needles. It was agonizing, and we simply could not keep them off. We wrapped scarves and towels, anything, round our heads, and left only a gap at our noses for breathing, but still they got in. Mosquito-nets they laughed at, for about three at once could get through a hole with perfect ease.

We had some anxious times with fire during this stretch. To clear a path, boys went ahead burning the tall grass. They kept the fire down as much as possible, but sometimes it got out of hand, and flames roared all round us; the cars passed within feet of it, and there were times when we had to stop in a burnt-out space and wait for it to move on. The wind blew the black, charred grass round us in gusts, and the heat was dangerously intense. We watched out for the petrol tanks, but we had to stay as close as possible to the boys who were working, in case they should run away if unwatched.

A sudden gust of wind would blow the flames toward us, and I held my breath thinking that the cars must blow up the next moment. Whole trees caught alight and blazed away, but by good luck the fire did not touch the cars, and we went through unscathed.

After we were out some days Dinkas appeared like magic from out of the bush. These tall people looked

graceful, leaning against trees, or sitting on the ground, their long spears by their sides, calabashes slung on their backs, and their beads and bangles shining against their dark bodies. They are a long, slim people, and occasionally a figure stands out from the rest that is broad in proportion to its height. The hair of the Red Dinkas was not so elaborately dressed as others we had seen ; in fact, some of their heads were completely shaven.

" *November* 29.—We did not get very far to-day. We are camped with the whole tribe here. It seems as if the place is alive with the murderous creatures. C.T. went ahead with Musa (our new boy from Wau, who is a treasure, and speaks English) to see what the boys were doing. He says that the way doesn't look too bad.

" *November* 30.—I have never felt more frightened, or nearer death, than I did last night. We reached an open patch in the forest at sundown, and camped with our mattresses on the ground beside the two cars, with the two hundred Dinkas following us, camped close by. I felt rather nervous when we went to bed at nine o'clock, and asked C.T. why the whole horde had made their fires so close to ours. He said that it was no use making a fuss now, but that if he had been in camp when they prepared to settle down there, he would have told them to go farther off.

" We got into our beds, and then the fun started. The whole two hundred began at once. A terrific shout opened the proceedings, followed by more shouts, bursts of song, and drums. Naked bodies, smeared with ash, moved like distorted shadows between the scores of little glowing fires, brandishing their spears and axes above their heads. You see, these old hyenas are quite wild and liable to do anything. It isn't a nice feeling by any means being in

close proximity to yelling savages at night, especially when you're in bed.

"They came a little closer, making the night utterly horrible with their terrible cries; and I clutched C.T. and whispered that I didn't like the look of things. I had the fear of a horrible death upon me, for the first time in my life. He laughed and patted my shoulder, and said that it was all right.

"Still they howled and yelled. C.T. said: 'Now, Stella, these birds are only trying to frighten us, and don't for a second let them think you are afraid.'

"We got out of bed, slipped our revolvers into our pockets, and one by one strolled out among them, appearing to be very entertained by the performance.

"By this time the Dinkas had screamed and danced themselves into a frenzy. I felt my knees grow weaker every moment. I think once in a lifetime everybody must have a supreme moment of horror, and that was mine.

"After a time they gradually calmed down and C.T. told Musa, our second boy and interpreter, to say that we 'liked the dance very much; it had been very entertaining. We thanked them, and if it was all the same to them we should like everybody to go to bed.' They quietened down, and the night was still, but for a droning murmur of voices which lulled me to sleep. I was astonished to wake this morning and find myself still here. I wonder what they had meant to do?

"We reached the *toich* at the Bahr el Arab at five o'clock to-day, and here we stay until we can find some kind of place to cross. Nuan Atojian says that the river, after all, is too full to cross.

"The Dinkas captured four Arabs this morning, and these people will not show us the crossing either. We

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suppose it is used for purposes of escape, for smuggling goods into the Sudan, or for stealing a slave or two from the Dinkas on this side; anyhow, they flatly refuse to tell.

"We were only just in time to prevent our band of Dinkas from cutting off the ears of two of the Arabs who were a bit obstreperous. C.T. has put all four under arrest, for their own protection, and the Askari has taken them off to the river, in the hope of getting something out of them. The native soldier is a Dinka, so I expect they will be persuaded to tell. Their excuse for being on this side is that they are gathering honey—but are more likely gathering slaves and stealing cattle. Six more of them have just been brought in; their spears and axes have been taken from them, and we shall keep them under our wing until they choose to tell. This *toich* is about eight miles wide, and we shall have to be dragged through it before we get the cars to the river.

"*December* 1.—The Askari got some kind of result from his trek with the Arabs. They fooled him four times, took him to impossible places, but he carried on like a good soldier, and eventually found a place where he tells us we shall be able to cross by building a bridge. The river is about thirty-five yards wide there, the sides not too deep, but the middle just plops away to a great depth. C.T. has gone out to look. I am ill with a bad go of influenza, Errol is mending the radiator, Fred writing, and G. is ill with a quaint fever we cannot understand. In fact, we are all ill.

"*December* 2.—Got a note from C.T. last evening. He is staying down at the river to build a bridge. There are no trees there, and all the timber will have to be dragged to the river, log by log, through the swamp, for miles.

He says that the grass in the *toich* is long and razor-sharp. The Dinkas must go out to him at dawn to-morrow, but the old devil of a chief is very difficult. I wanted the people to go this morning, but he said it was impossible: all his people were in the forest. He could quite easily have collected and sent them out. Hope he doesn't get homicidal mania again.

"9 A.M.—Have just heard that he sent the people out after all—he loves to beat about the bush. Errol and G. are attending to things. G. has impressed the chief with some rapid revolver-firing. The old bird was amazed, and says that he knows all about one bullet coming out of a gun, but not all of them at once. He has been initiated into the art of shaving. He thought that the 'white stuff' was some kind of clay. Julius explained that it was soap, and gave him some to try. Mrs Atojian has just shaved off all his hair with a safety-razor blade, after soaping his head till it looked like a snow-peak.

"*December* 3.—C.T. sent in word to say that the boys are hopelessly slow. The poor man is ill with fever and swollen glands. Nothing much here, we are just waiting. Errol shot a buck, and Mrs Atojian wanted the skin. Errol wanted it too, for the soles of his veldtschoen, which have died on him. He said that she could have only half. She was angry at that and made an awful noise, collected all her baskets, and said: 'Well, if you won't give me the whole skin, I'm going.' She strutted off a few yards, and Errol calmly cut the skin in halves, whereupon the lady threw down her baskets, and came back, talking like mad. She took the half.

"*December* 4.—Julius has gathered that the men intend running away as soon as they have taken some timber down to C.T. I let C.T. know this immediately,

THE FIRST CAR TO CROSS THE BAHR EL ARAB

and I've just had a note from him to say that he and the Askari are watching for them with rifles. Errol has got to stay here to take C.T.'s orders. It is a nuisance having two camps, but unavoidable.

"C.T. sent note to say that the makeshift bridge is finished, so we leave here at dawn, and the boys will drag us through the swamp to the river—that is, if they don't desert in the night.

"We are all very weak and ill. We were attacked to-day by an infuriated swarm of bees. We had to tear off our hats, as they even got under the brims. G. was stung seven times, but I escaped with two, on the neck and head. We are now soothing our hurts with ammonia and a little brandy-and-water! The natives disturb the bees by chopping their honey out of the tree trunks, and they swarm madly all over the place.

"*December* 5.—We started at dawn, and were pulled through miles of grassy swamp by about two hundred and fifty natives, until we reached the river, where C.T. awaited us, looking very ill. I don't think I have ever seen such an impressive sight as those naked, beaded savages presented, with their long spears glistening in the sunlight, and some of them carried as many as three or four. They sang and pranced by the side of the cars, enacted little battles, and howled with derision as they pretended to spear their fellows pulling the cars. It was thrilling, and almost terrifying.

"C.T.'s bridge was made and ready for us to cross on. He ordered the Dinkas to pile their spears on the farther bank, and we got over all right in the first car, in spite of an argument with the Dinkas—who did not wish to pull us across—and sinking into a hole in the bridge while C.T. and I were crossing. One of the cross-supports had given

way, but we levered the bus up, mended the gap, and got her over. The second car, after a few hitches, was also safely piloted across and parked beside the other one on the opposite bank.

"The natives played about in the river, swam, and speared fish.

"On this side we had an awful bother with the chief. He did not want his people to pull us through the swamp which faced us. We have learned that the Bahr el Arab is a tribal boundary between the Dinkas and their Arab neighbours to the north, and the Dinkas don't come here for fear of the Arabs. But C.T., foreseeing the difficulty, had shot two buck, and hung them in a tree five or six miles over the boundary, and when the Dinkas were told that this meat was waiting for them it was sufficient to induce them to waive their scruples and take us through the swamp, at any rate as far as the meat.

"In spite of their reluctance to build it, the Dinkas seemed to be attached to the bridge when it was done, for they said that the Arabs would come and destroy it as soon as they were gone, and asked permission to put up a sign to show that it was a 'white man's bridge.' Of course we said they could, and they hunted round until they came across a page from an old *Tatler*, lying on the floor of one of the cars. This they hung on a pole near the bridge, and were confident that it would overawe the fiercest Arab.

"C.T. read the old chief a lecture before we parted —told him he was good in some ways, and d—— bad in others, and explained exactly why.

"So now we are clear of the river and swamp, and the Dinkas have all gone back."

We were now able to discuss the position and compare

notes with C.T. We sat down there in the bush, with not a sound stirring the air. Our old friends the Dinks had simply faded away, and we could hardly believe that we had ever been in their savage midst.

C.T. told me that he had had a rough time while at the river building the bridge. He spent the first day searching up and down the river before he could find a suitable place to build it, and when he did find the place the Dinkas, of course, promptly said it was impossible, and refused to work. He had to use considerable tact, and stronger methods, before he could get them even to start work. The only spot he could find to camp on was a little knoll of burnt grass, which rose only a few inches above the surrounding swamp. The first night the boys who had been sent from the base camp with his bed-roll, mosquito-net, and food, lost their way, and did not turn up until two o'clock in the morning. He spent the night up to that time sitting in the smoke of two fires, in an endeavour to keep off the thousands of mosquitoes.

He said that the most difficult part of the bridge-building was getting in the main supports. The river was about twenty feet deep in the middle, so it was necessary to drive in piles about twenty-five feet long. In the end he made a tripod of saplings; the natives swam out with this tripod, managed to set it up, by means of about ten hanging on to each leg, and so got it down to the bottom of the river. Others then swam out with poles, which were driven in by two men wielding a big block of wood from the top of the tripod. Meanwhile, in the river, these poles were rocked backward and forward to help them to sink into the mud, but once they and the cross-runners were in the work was not so

difficult, although all the wood had to be cut in the forest about ten miles off, and dragged across the swamp.

The Dinkas were very restive and gave continuous trouble. They were constantly refusing to work, and continually fighting among themselves. C.T. had with him six of the young Dinka chiefs, who were sullen and decidedly hostile. Not only were they always trying to get away—in which case, of course, they would have taken their men with them—but they were always trying to get at the two Arabs, whom C.T. had to keep with him to show us the way north from the river.

One of the young chiefs, who was a ringleader of the malcontents, came on to the bridge when it was just started, and began to yell and brandish his spears; meanwhile the tribesmen sat on the bank, to see what the upshot of it would be. Through the interpreter, C.T. asked what the trouble was, and the chief said that they were not going to work any longer, and that they did not want the white men to make a bridge, so C.T., seeing that things must be brought to a head somehow, promptly kicked him into the river, thinking this would either awe the natives or bring the expected crisis. As a matter of fact, it had quite an unexpected effect, for the whole tribe rolled about in a state of helpless laughter when they saw their chief swimming out, crowned with a mass of muddy reeds.

The previous night C.T. had made his camp within a few yards of a party of Dinkas with large elephant spears, the heads of which were two feet long and eight inches broad, and as sharp as razors. C.T. did not like the look of the spears, which the men were fingering uneasily and malevolently, but did not risk directly asking them to hand them over. He had unaccountable difficulty

in putting up the mosquito-nets for his bed that night: the sticks somehow would not go into the ground. In an obvious bad temper he strode over to the Dinkas, said in English, "Those sticks are no damn' good," and indicated that he would borrow their spears. They assented dubiously, so C.T. dug them head downwards into the ground, and after that putting up the mosquito-net seemed to be easier. Eight spears were scarcely necessary to hold up one net, but nevertheless made things more comfortable. It was a nervous night, and he had expected to be chopped up at any moment.

C.T. had had practically no sleep the whole time, and was very ill. He could eat no solid food, as he was suffering from an abscess in his throat. He said that, in a good deal of experience, he had never met so many biting flies, or such herds of mosquitoes. He says, too, that he has never met natives so difficult to deal with, or so impossible to understand, for they seem to be quite without powers of reasoning, and so volatile that it is impossible to foresee what they will do next.

The humid heat at the Bahr el Arab is unforgettable. Leaden-grey mists rose from the swamp in the afternoons about four o'clock, and did not clear away until ten the next morning. At times, down by the river, it was almost a fog, and we were all rather up against it there. We were very sick; we had fever and swollen glands, and our bodies were tired and sore through continually being bitten by insects and cut by poisonous grass. We had no food other than meat and native grain. We had no salt, rice, or tea. We had only a handful of coffee, which was eked out in such minute rations that when it was made we could barely taste that it was coffee, but at least it served to disguise the bad taste of the water. We

could bear being without most things, when it was necessary, but the hardest thing of all to be without was salt. The Dinkas had not brought cattle to the Bahr el Arab, otherwise we might have amplified our meals with milk. Our luxuries ran out quickly, for we could not carry much beside essentials, and by this time we were in need of good sustaining food. We were very thin and hungry people.

We packed up our kit, and moved off once more. We were very sorry to say good-bye to the negro, for he isn't a bad sort really, and is very often a true gentleman. From there we met Arabs, or what were alleged to be Arabs. They were a queer mixture in that part of the Sudan and we had kept two of the captured ones with us to show us the path to Abu Gabra, for it was almost too shadowy to see until we got about fifty miles farther north, to Abu Matarik, where the road began.

We also took a Dinka with us to Abu Gabra. He wished to see 'the Government,' as the year before the Arabs had come down and stolen seven children, while they were out gathering honey in the forest. 'The Government' had rescued these seven children, and he was on his way to the magistrate to identify his two.

We had hard and rough going after we left the rivers. Elephant during the wet weather had ploughed up the country. How the springs of the cars stood the strain goodness knows.

"*December* 6.—We have had a day of heat, burnt grass, dust, and bumps, to say nothing of the smashing branches of trees continually hitting the hoods and us. We really are beginning to feel the need of good food. We have been lucky the last two days, though. We have had buck and guinea-fowl, and also duck. But these cannot

be properly appreciated, because they must necessarily be cooked at once, without salt, within an hour or so after shooting, for we have nothing else. Last night we lay on our beds, and we each in turn said what we'd like to eat. C.T. spread himself on trout. I howled for lobster and lots of iced fruits and drinks. Errol wanted grilled steak and tomatoes. Fred said he'd take a look at anything that one could 'eat.' G. wanted Welsh rarebit, and we do always ache for ham and eggs!

"We saw a land of giant birds to-day, where big storks sedately perched on tall bare trees. Pelicans too. The light was funny, hazy, and woolly. No good for photography. It has gone altogether now, and I'll have to stop for the added reason that the mosquitoes are eating me up. It will be too utterly wonderful when we get out of their haunts.

"*December* 7.—We have struck a snag again—another muddy *toich* to negotiate. Small one, but goodness knows how we shall get through. There are no natives. We camp here to-night and will look-see to-morrow. I suppose there are upheavals in official quarters by now, as nobody has heard from us, and they don't know where we are. They expected us to come out at Safaha, but that way is impossible. Our only chance of getting through to Abu Gabra at all was by going this way. We still have two Arabs with us to show us the path that will eventually lead us to Abu Gabra. The path is not more than a shadow on the ground. I can't see even the suggestion of a path, except in occasional spots, where there is just a flicker of one. This is the long-dreamed-of 'road of the Arabs.' It sounds pretty, anyhow.

"*December* 8.—I am afraid that we shall be delayed here a couple of days. We are cutting trees and laying

the trunks down side by side to form a kind of platform. There is a shallow river running in the middle of the *toich*. We have very little shelter here. The trees are dry scrubby mimosa. Young shoots are appearing on a few of the branches, but their shade is *nil*. It is very hot.

"*December* 9.—Still struggling along in the same place. Six Arabs turned up this afternoon, riding bulls. They were on their way to the Bahr el Arab, where they intend getting honey. We have persuaded them to help us out of this fix, so they are camped here to-night. Hope to get the cars out to-morrow. The game here is very wild. Shot at, no doubt, by the Arabs. Between the Loll and the Bahr el Arab it was tamer. We got some still pictures of them, taken from the car. We bagged a few at fairly close range and some at three hundred yards. The meat was useful for the boys, as well as for our pot. They were mostly hartebeest. I don't think that I shall ever be an ardent huntress though; I loathe killing, and the chase doesn't thrill me a bit.

"I feel so ill to-day. I wonder when we shall be home. Errol has gone out to try to get some meat. We have only bully beef, Bovril, and native meal. No sugar and no salt, but we got a little rice from the Arabs, and that is something.

"*December* 10.—Car not through yet. We can't find this river on the map. It is called, by the Arabs, Ardeb. We must cross another farther on called Gatchi-Gatchi.

"*December* 11, 12 *noon*.—The cars are just out, so now we shall get the kit loaded, and will be on the road this afternoon.

"*December* 12.—We crossed the Gatchi-Gatchi to-day. It was comparatively easy. The same kind of river as the

last, but with the advantage of being narrower, so that we could block-and-tackle over. Two Arabs appeared while we were trying to get the cars over, and we hailed them, thinking that they would help us pull. When they came near, though, we found that one had a foot missing, and the other had no hands, so they were not able to be of much use.

"To-night we are dead-beat. We have come along the roughest country of all our trek. Hard elephant tracks all over the place. We bumped and banged through them all day. I had to walk most of the way. My inside feels positively torn. C.T. has sprained his back. Errol is lying flat on his, too tired to move. Kima howled with the jolting of the car, and is done in.

"*December* 13.—We are trying to make Abu Matarik to-day, a little village where we might get some salt. It is cold this morning. A chilly north wind blew all night, and is still active.

"Musa tells us stories of the wicked days, not so long ago, in Kafia Kinghi, when a bad Khalifa practised utmost cruelties and tortures upon offenders, preferably of another tribe. One method was to bury a man up to his neck in the ground, and let men on horseback dash furiously over his head. Our two maimed Arabs probably belong to this period.

"*December* 14.—Only a few more days to Christmas. I wonder whether we shall be able to get anything to eat by then. Last night we fared quite well. We had a brace of young guinea-fowl, seasoned with Bovril. It almost tasted as if there were salt and pepper on them. Yesterday, at the last running water we shall see for many a mile, we met Arabs who sold us some good honey, though slightly sour. We did not reach Abu Matarik, but hope

to do so this morning. It is one of those elusive places that never gets any nearer.

"There are lots of hartebeest about here. We came upon a herd of about two hundred or more yesterday, and G. got pictures of them. The country is just a tangled mass of holes made by innumerable elephant, giraffe, and buck during the rains. It can hardly be imagined what our path was like. It is incredible how the cars stick up to it. They crash incessantly into holes three feet across, and sometimes as deep. It is almost more than can be endured at times. Our nerves are wearing to shreds. We are getting horribly snappy and bad-tempered, and I feel as if I must have a nervous breakdown at any minute. But it is nothing but reaction. We are through the swamps, and the desert lies ahead."

CHAPTER XVI

ABU MATARIK TO HALFA

THE change was abrupt from swamps, rivers, and trees to the sandy pre-desert country. It seemed that we had turned a bend in the path to happen upon camels, Arabs, and sand, at Abu Matarik. It is a small Arab encampment, where we were able to buy some necessities, such as salt and flour. A road began from there, and it was a day's run to Abu Gabra, the first Government station we had come to since we had left Aweil.

The young British officer in charge met us with frank astonishment. He told us that he had not expected to see us for months, until the Bahr el Arab had subsided, as he thought that we should have had to go back to Wau. He had sent an Askari and some Arabs down to meet us at Safaha, the news having got through to him that we had gone that way, but they had returned and reported that it was quite unthinkable that we should be able to cross the swamps anywhere, and that the river was twenty feet deep. The whole country would be amazed, he said, and awfully bucked. The men who had been sent out to meet us simply stared. So apparently we had accomplished something rather worth while.

We sent the Askari back from there and took on an Abu Gabra policeman — an Arab. It is a strange country, old Africa; one day we were with savages, and the next among Arabs, who rode on gorgeous ponies, on donkeys, and on camels. It looked so strange to our

negro-accustomed eyes to see these Arabs, with their lovely white robes, their white turbans, and their graceful manners.

It was December 15, 1925, and our host at Abu Gabra insisted upon our sharing his champagne. Of all the unselfish acts I had ever known I think that was one of the greatest! I wanted him to promise to save a bottle, but he maintained that it was not much fun drinking champagne alone. He showed us his four polo ponies, and told us that he was teaching some of the young Arabs to play polo. We hated leaving him alone out there, but I suppose he liked it. He was spending his splendid youth in the service of his country, and there were many such as he.

We passed through Muglad up to Abu Zabad and our road was a road, though bad and sandy, with patches of desert; and here and there along the way were bright splashes of colour, where men and women rode on red-saddled donkeys and camels, with striped cloths floating behind them. We saw women riding bulls, while other women walked beside them, beating the animals on with slender sticks.

We saw some wonderful Arab horsemanship at Abu Zabab, but we were just too late for the horse show, which is a feature of this part of the Sudan. We were told by the officer there that it was a sight worth seeing, with its decorated camels and bulls, and the exquisite horsemanship of the Arabs. But we were in time to see some of the splendour of it, for we came upon parties who were just leaving, with their gorgeously decorated animals, with palanquins of bright hand-woven materials, and trappings of coloured leather-work, deeply fringed with plaited leather. The bulls were just as lavishly decorated as the camels. From their horns depended

DECORATED CAMELS

long leather streamers, bordered by three or four rows of closely arranged cowrie shells. They moved to the accompaniment of fairly large-sized brass bells, clustered in groups of four on projections from the palanquins. Inside the palanquins sat ladies with kohl-smudged eyes and greased and plaited hair, with silver head-dresses encircling their heads, falling about their foreheads and ears in little chains, at the ends of which were suspended silver discs.

The men rode splendid little Arab ponies, and did their famous charge for us, about a hundred strong, stopping dead a foot or so in front of the camera. Their method of making a horse rear up on his hind-legs is dreadfully cruel, for they use an iron-pronged bit, which bites into the roof of the horse's mouth. When the rein is pulled tight the animal rears up with pain, and by a cunning turn of the wrist is pulled to a standstill.

We saw what was said to be genuine Crusader chain-mail, and I believe it *was* genuine. There were two suits, and they were quite different from anything turned out from Birmingham. We saw imitations as well, and there could be no mistaking the real from the false. The old sheik told us that these two suits had existed long before the Arab invasion of the Sudan. They had been repaired, but the ancient links, though worn very thin, seemed genuine enough.

These Arabs knew something of geography, and they were greatly interested in our journey across Africa. They had heard of us months before, for news in Africa travels quickly, in some mysterious way. They told us that they were amazed at our getting through the swamps and then, finally, the Bahr el Arab. They knew that our route had lain sometimes through roadless, untravelled,

and unsurveyed country, through bridgeless rivers and swamps. They solemnly salaamed, and, in beautifully expressed language, complimented us on getting through.

On December 20 we reached our goal, El Obeid, the capital of Kordofan, after our *détour* of about eleven hundred miles round the Sudd. When we were within forty miles of El Obeid a rear wheel of each car caved in almost at the same time. All the way along spokes had been torn from the wheels by branches, and the twenty miles or so over ground ploughed up by elephants finished them off. We patched up No. 1 car with a good wheel from No. 2, and with her two drivers, Fred and Errol, we drove into El Obeid, leaving the maimed car on the road, with most of our scanty kit, in charge of the Abu Gabra policeman.

We arrived very travel-stained and ragged, and had tea with the Governor and his wife, and then settled down in a comfortable house put at our disposal, to enjoy rest and the delights of the station for a few days, until new wheels from our Khartoum dump arrived. C.T. borrowed a couple of wheels from somebody in El Obeid on the day of our arrival there, and went out and put them on the derelict and brought her in at about one o'clock next morning.

We were able to buy some luxuries for Christmas at the local store, and in spite of protests from everybody started off at eight o'clock on Christmas morning, made quite good headway over sandy country, and camped at sundown by the railway line which runs from El Obeid to Khartoum. There were no trees there, the ground was plain yellow sand with green bushes clumped at intervals over the flat surface. We found some old wooden sleepers by the line, which we used to make a blazing fire. It was

ARAB IN CRUSADER CHAIN-MAIL

Christmas, and we must celebrate! A table—yes, we must have a table. Four petrol-boxes placed together would do; and we must have something with which to cheer it up. So the old orange scarf was brought out again. It had been used the Christmas before, in such a different setting, during that astonishing period of rain in Rhodesia. We could not help contrasting that time, when we were so desperately wet and cold, with the present conditions as we sat there on the dry sand, under the bright stars. Julius cooked the turkey we had brought from El Obeid, and by the light of our fire we ate our Christmas fare.

The next day we travelled from six in the morning until twelve at night, and camped we did not know quite where, but we guessed that it was somewhere near El Dueim, where we must cross the White Nile again. The country was bare; there were no trees, and the sand was patchy, hard, and soft. We were off the road, in a desert. There were camel tracks which were most misleading, but the following morning we hit the Nile at El Dueim. We came on it quite unexpectedly. We saw what we thought was a mirage on the skyline, but it proved to be the Nile. There it was, glistening in the sunlight, broad, with a few little islands dotted about in the middle. It seemed at least two thousand yards wide, and there were native boats dancing on the shining water, with their white sails catching the wind, and the Governor's private little steamer was among other craft moored near the bank.

El Dueim is a big market town and trade centre, where most of the gum arabic comes to, from Kordofan, and is shipped from there. We met the District Commissioner, who had been out trying a new pony on the sand, and about an hour after our arrival the Governor appeared and collected us all to go to his house for lunch.

He was a marvellous man, for he seemed to have everything for our pleasure, and the first on the list was a mosquito-proof room full of divine puppies who all yelped and tumbled over each other at once.

We looked at illustrated papers, drank *iced* drinks, played the gramophone, and had hot baths, with the final and transcendent luxury of bath salts!

After lunch C.T. and Errol got the cars across in the ferry steamer. They returned for us, and we got off and enjoyed a trip across the river in the natty little steamer.

We found when we got over that the first car needed a minor repair, which delayed us a little time. Finally we got away by dark. We travelled a few miles out, missed the track, and got lost. We camped where we were for the night, and got off early next day, reaching Khartoum at 1.30. We found to our disgust that all the Government offices were closed. This delayed us, but the next day C.T. was able to attend to various affairs, and we got off again in the afternoon.

Khartoum is the centre of administration for the Sudan, and is an appealing place, but I could not explore it as I should have wished because we spent so little time there. The hotels, clubs, private houses, and Government offices on the embankment facing the Blue Nile command a very fascinating view of the river, where the little white-sailed boats glide to and fro. The Governor-General's palace has a lovely garden, and inside the palace can be seen a tablet marking the spot where poor Gordon fell.

"*December* 29.—In the desert again. We got away at half-past five. An awful rush. We were asked to lunch with the Governor-General. We didn't have time to sneeze, and G. and I were taken over to Omdurman by a

guide in a Ford car. We were ferried across, car and all. Between Khartoum and Omdurman the two Niles meet. We actually saw the Blue and the White Niles mingle—the blue one quite blue, and the white one quite brown! In Omdurman we shopped, and got little presents for our friends at home. G. filmed the interesting Arab town of mud houses and narrow little native streets, where Arabs and people of all colours and nationalities meet, where donkeys, camels, dogs, and children jostle each other. To my mind it is the most interesting native town we have seen, with mud houses and streets flung haphazard over the red soil with little or no attempt at architectural arrangement. It is a closely packed town and the houses crowd side by side in queer angles along the narrow zigzag streets.

"The place looks like a big *sūq*[1] where all is noise and movement. There are bright splashes of colour in the basket, leather, and bead work displayed in the open doorways, and flashing gaily by in the dress of native children on red-saddled donkeys. And the babel of voices in those narrow thronged streets where everybody talks and bargains at once!—their chatter interspersed with their favourite exclamations of '*Bismillah!*' '*Hamdulillah!*' and '*Inshalla!*'

"Men, women, and children followed us about offering their wares of fans—black circular Sudanese fans—ivory, leather bags, beads and silks, scents and amber, all 'ver' cheap,' and if we had given them more than five rupees when they asked for ten they would have considered us poor fools indeed.

"We saw the great open mosque, which is simply an immense walled and unroofed space which could hold

[1] Market.

thousands of praying figures. It is just beneath the palace windows, from which the old Khalifa could watch the faithful who came from far and near to pray, and so be able to keep a finger on the pulse of his people.

"We saw the ruin of the tyrant Khalifa's palace, and, in a walled enclosure opposite, the Mahdi's tomb where Arabs knelt praying at the gate—many of them are still faithful. We went out to the battlefield and saw the place where the battle of Omdurman was fought, then came back to Khartoum, packed up and dashed off. We were 'seen off' by excited American ladies and dear old mossy English ones, among whom the monkey created tremendous excitement, and we crossed the Nile by the magnificent iron bridge, which is over seven hundred yards long.

"*December* 30.—Had a hard day with heavy sand. Did seventy-five miles. We were held up for two hours because Fred had the misfortune to break a C-spring. We are camped at Omda, a little village half-way between Khartoum and Shendi. Dogs are barking, babies crying. We are able to buy bread here.

"*December* 31.—So ends our long year. We made good mileage to-day. We reached Shendi, a biggish Arab town, at 10; got a guide there, and sent him back by train this evening. We passed through the ancient Ethiopian city of Meroe this afternoon. The ruins are extremely interesting, and you can walk along parts of the old, old streets. The city flourished up to the seventh century A.D., and was at its height of prosperity in the ninth century B.C., and was the centre of great luxury and wealth. The old ruined Sun temple is very interesting, and the bases of the enormous pillars are in some cases almost intact. We saw what looked like a sacrificial stone, with steps

FELUCCA ON THE NILE

leading up to it. The stone is decorated with Egyptian carvings of figures, kneeling with their hands tied behind their backs.

"We saw in the distance the Meroe pyramids. We have been travelling beside the Nile, and in places along by the railway line. We have passed through mud-built native villages, and this morning when we stopped to fill up with water we met a perfect darling of an old Arab, who gave us coffee and a watermelon. He was so fatherly, gentle, and kind that I felt almost like hugging him. It is bitterly cold at night, and in the dewy morn, when we get up at 4.30, Kima snuggles up in my lap and refuses to be moved. He likes the Jaeger blanket I wrap round myself, and him, when we start off. He adores the blue bead necklace he wears, and toys with it like a girl. He twists it about in his fingers, and bites it with his teeth.

"Sand is heavy in parts, but we have some cunning gadgets for this. They are ordinary thick teak boards which we lay down in front of the wheels, and they are simply the thing for sand.

"*January* 1, 1926.—We arrived at El Damer, the capital of Berber province, at ten this morning, where we were met by the Governor and his wife. I like these big Arab towns with their fascinating little narrow streets. A guide was obtained to go with us to Abu Hamed, and to-night we are staying with the D.C. at Berber. I have just had a luxurious hot bath. We travelled over desert all day, and we saw occasional villages on the bank of the Nile where curious plates of various sizes adorned the walls above the front doors of houses. We reached Atbara at twelve, where we crossed the huge iron railway bridge over the Nile. Atbara is the big junction of the Sudan railways, and we were helped by the O.C. railways there,

who had men laying teak planks down on the outer side of the rails for our cars to run on. This was slow work, because the cars could only move about twelve feet at a time, when the planks would have to be moved up again. It took three hours, working all out; but we kept going until dusk, when we got to Berber. So now to bed. Our New Year has begun encouragingly.

"*January* 2.—Have had a hard day. Our guides are good. We got the second one from Berber. They led us a long way out, away from the railway and river, but they certainly took us over the hardest bits of desert. It seems incredible that we have been travelling over sand about three feet deep, but we have. In places we were able to skim the hard crust by going at thirty miles an hour. Of course we must keep going or we should sink. Some parts of the desert are hard and stony, and we try to keep on this as much as possible. There are no trees, no grass, and very little bush. Occasionally we see a few clumps of tiny sticklike bushes, about as big as finger-bowls, with no leaves on them. We saw some wild camels. To-night we are camped near the railway line and the Nile. We have done one hundred and twenty-eight miles, and hope to average one hundred miles a day to Cairo.

"*January* 3.—We reached Abu Hamed at 11 o'clock, and the men mended the leaking radiator of No. 2 car. We had coffee in the Sudanese fashion, made in a *jebena*,[1] and drunk out of little cups without handles. These *jebenas* are carried in beautiful coloured straw and beaded baskets—called '*gabotas*.' The *mamur* is a Sudanese, and quite charming. He gave us some chickens, and two goatskins of dates, also some *jebenas* to take home with us. Our mileage to-day has not been great, only seventy-

[1] Sudanese earthenware coffee-pot.

eight, which we hope to beat to-morrow, and so make up the hundred miles a day average. All is sand, sand, and mud houses, but I love it.

"*January* 4.—Had an exciting race with the Sudan express train, and beat it too! The sand was very hard by the railway line, and we did forty miles an hour. When we got to the station the passengers all flocked out and took photos of us. Some of them had been to El Obeid to see the gum-arabic market, which we had been told was the most important gum-arabic market in the world. We did one hundred and twenty-three miles to-day and should get to Halfa to-morrow.

"*January* 5.—We reached Halfa to-day at five. The Governor rode out to meet us on a white pony, accompanied by a servant. After exchanging greetings he rode ahead and guided us in, and we are staying with him in his charming house. We are going by boat to Abu Simbel to-morrow to see the temple. It is carved out of the rock of the bank of the Nile, and is one of the wonders of the early Egyptians' art and craft.

"*January* 6.—This morning we took the train down to the landing-stage on the river, and from there travelled up the Nile for four hours on a dear little Sudan Government steamer to Abu Simbel. It is simply heavenly steaming down the Nile. There are lots of little islands, and you can see the natives digging their ground by the banks of the river, and boys walking by *shadufs*,[1] which are in the true ancient Egyptian style, urging the oxen as they walk round and round. All along the banks are native villages, some with houses showing the curious plates in the walls, which I find denote the presence of unmarried daughters in the house—a useful

[1] Water-wheels.

custom for would-be swains. It must save them a lot of time when looking for a wife.

" The temple of Abu Simbel is one of the most interesting in Egypt. Four colossal images of Rameses II sit before the temple, with his wives, sons, and daughters, in comparative miniature, standing between his huge legs and by his side. The inside of the temple is amazing, and the whole thing was hewn out of a solid mountain of rock. It was marvellously done : all the figures and hieroglyphs look as if they had been carved only a few years ago, instead of ages. The colour has come off a good deal, but you can still see it quite distinctly. The little ' Birth Chamber ' by the south side has the best colour, for here the blues, yellows, and browns are still beautiful and bright.

" Coming back at six this evening we saw the openings to smaller temples in the rocky hills, by the river bank on the east, and an ancient fortress on the top of a hill. We are gently puffing up-stream back to Halfa, and shall sleep on board the steamer and land in peace and comfort to-morrow.

" *January* 7.—The Governor has tried hard to find a guide for us. Nobody knows the desert from here to Shellal. The official wire from Cairo said : ' Halfa to Shellal quite impossible by car.' But we are going to try !

" This place gives the impression of being quite the most deserty of desert places. The sand looks bottomless, but there must be hard stuff away from the river. The Governor and C.T. are busy now, questioning Arabs, and trying to get somebody who can come with us to show us a kind of way. We shall go away from all water, and it means that if we don't get through in a week we're

dished for water, unless we find some Arabs crossing on camels—which is unlikely, as they do not travel the way we are attempting. The people at home don't know just what we are in for. They think we are practically home. So we are, if this bit can be crossed."

CHAPTER XVII

HALFA TO SHELLAL

WE had been warned by both the Sudan and the Egyptian Governments that there was no way for our cars to go from Halfa to Shellal except by boat. The rocky hills on either side of the Nile extend for about one hundred and eighty miles. They run sheer down into the waters of the Nile, and there was no possible way for the cars on either bank. We knew of the old caravan route on the western bank—known as the Arba'in road—but this was useless to us because of the deep and heavy sand, which we could never have crossed. There was only one way for us, and that was to chance what lay to the east of the big rock *jebels* [1] on the eastern bank. A proper guide could not be found to take us round, for that side was not used by camel caravans. There were two Arabs in the *sūq* who knew the lie of the land, but who had never been across it. The elder man had been along part of the way when he was a young man, but he told us that he had abandoned the route and turned down to the Nile for water.

These two guides were the best the Governor could give us, and he did not feel disposed to allow us to risk the journey; but C.T. was determined to attempt it, and once more we cut weight down as much as possible, carried more water than anything else, and started off with a definite plan to skirt round the *jebels* about eighty miles to the east.

[1] Hills.

"*January* 8.—We left Halfa at five yesterday afternoon. The Governor guided us out for a few miles. After he had returned we made the hideous discovery that the radiator of No. 2 car was leaking again, so C.T. and Errol had to go back to Halfa to repair it.

"It was a bitterly cold night out on the windswept desert, and it rained a little, the first rain for years in this part of the Sudan, the guides tell us. We dragged a tarpaulin over our beds and lay low until it was over. I've never been so cold in my life. C.T. and Errol were safe and snug in the Governor's house at Halfa. This stung!

"This morning we used the water out of my hot-water bottle for:

Item 1. Washing.
Item 2. Tooth-cleaning.
Item 3. Men's shaves.
Item 4. The radiator.

Not bad going for one bottleful! C.T. has put G. in charge of the water. We have enough to last for six days if we are fearfully careful. Every drop used is noted and measured. We have two Arab guides, but neither of them knows the route to Shellal. They merely have 'desert sense,' and a sense of direction. C.T. and Errol back.

"To-night we are all pretty frozen. It has been fiercely cold all day, with a biting wind cutting our faces. We haven't seen the sun all day. The sand was fairly set, and often we could go at the rate of thirty miles an hour. If the sand doesn't get any worse, and the mountains of rock are not without a gap farther on, we ought to get through quite soon and comparatively easily.

"*January* 9.—A long and trying day. The second car did nothing but stick. Sand heavy: we are in the mountains, and the sand seems to bank up between the hills. It is curious to see high hills of nothing but rock. Not a blade of any kind of vegetation anywhere, and as far as the eye can see there is only sand and more sand.

"To-night we are camped under the lee of a hill which is nothing but an enormous rock in the process of decay. It is falling to pieces and hardly safe to camp under, but it forms a very good wind-break. The temperature was about 50° to 57° all day, and it is colder now. This weather seems unnatural, somehow, for a desert. People usually talk about the desert's 'burning sands.'

"*January* 10.—We got off at 7 A.M. Stuck five minutes after we left. Lost half an hour. Got going. Stuck. Lost another half-hour. Then we let some of the air out of the back tyres of the second car (the wheels are the smaller ones we got at Khartoum) to see if flatter ones would run better. Julius let out too much, and it then had to be repumped; and so the morning had gone. Now at eleven o'clock a C-spring has broken again.

"Our Arab guides told us last night that to-day we should reach Kosti, by the river—'the place of the Greeks where they dig in the sand.' Thus Musa—meaning that Greeks are there digging for gold. Now they tell us that we have passed Kosti to the left and *might* reach Shellal to-morrow night. It seems that they have an idea of the direction, but never quite know where they are. We can only pray that our water holds out, and plug on like fury to get out of this desert. It is fascinating, but it makes you feel rather like a trapped animal. There are so many

awful things that might happen that one doesn't dare to think of them. It will be too wonderful to get to England, for lots of things—warm beds, good food, and other jolly things, and, above all, to see the ones we love; but I dread it too. It will mean worry. If only people will not expect me to be active and amusing when I want to be alone, or rest in bed until noon, it won't be too bad. I want to be able to do just what I like for a change, although I would not have missed the journey for anything in the world. It has been a marvellous adventure. But my body and spirit are tired, and I must relax.

"6 *o'clock*.—We got started at one this afternoon, and wound in and out of the mountains, sometimes at thirty miles an hour, sometimes at two. We have seen no living thing save one ravenous beetle. It appeared while we lunched, and simply fell on a piece of bully. There is no bird nor beast. We have seen no spoor on the sand, only our own tracks winding away behind us. We did sixty-three miles to-day. Now the guides say that we must go east, still farther back behind the mountains. Heaven knows if it will lead us out all right.

"*January* 11.—A perfectly beastly day. We only made twenty miles. Had tyre trouble again. We had to part with one of the two double-cord tyres that has run on the car all the way from Cape Town. We hope that the remaining one will last out to Cairo. The tyres on the new wheels are dud. Had two punctures in them. Rather hot having tyre trouble here, with our water running out so quickly. We went back some miles to-day and then went farther east. Travelled twenty miles, then late in the afternoon the guides said: 'We must go back again, and cut away to the east'—still farther from the river.

So off we went again, until it was dark, and here we are, camped goodness knows where, in more mountains. I suppose, really, we have got only a few miles forrarder. We seem to do nothing but twist about mountains, then go back on our own spoor.

" Kima got away this morning while they were mending a tyre. I chased him up hills and down again, and finally caught him, when C.T. got behind a big rock and made fearsome noises like infuriated buffaloes. He was terrified, and dashed for the safety of his ' mother's ' arms ! He loathes the desert ; it seems to frighten him. He kicks and screams when I attempt to lead him away from the cars. I suppose he misses the trees and grass.

" Our guides inform us to-night that their food has run out. They were given two pounds with which to buy rations, but apparently spent two shillings on them. We have given them some of our diminishing store.

" To-day the guides tell us that they are quite definitely lost. We know in which direction the river lies, and if the worst happens we can make for that on foot, but it would break our hearts to abandon the cars. We cannot have come so far to lose—now ! We shall have to have water soon. It is almost done. I wonder if we shall reach the Nile ? If all else fails, we must attempt the desert still farther east, to the Red Sea. If we must try this it will be a desperate gamble, for large tracts of it are unknown, and may be soft sand.

" *Later.*—Thank God, we have found an outlet in the mountanis. Julius found it, and is very proud of the fact. It is a dry water-course, which ought to lead us to the water. So we should be able to get to Shellal now.

" *January* 13.—Travelled about forty miles, along fairly

hard sand, and hit a camel track. We said, 'Shellal and Assuan in a few hours'; but on travelling farther we met a 'rescue-party' of Arabs on camels, sent out to find us by the Governor of Assuan, who told us that we are not coming out at Shellal at all, but at a place called Allaghi. They have brought food and water, and tell us that the Egyptian and Sudan Governments are very anxious about us. We brought the leader of the rescue party back in one of the cars—a triumph!

"To-night we are camped by the Nile, at Allaghi, a small village. We shall have to ferry the cars over the Nile once more to the west bank, where there is a way to Shellal. On this side there is no way for the cars through the range of mountains higher up, and it is fortunate that we hit Allaghi. The way is said to be not excessively bad on the west bank, from here to the Nile at Shellal, and it is only fifty miles. We are waiting here for a steamer to take us across; it is supposed to arrive at four to-morrow morning.

"There has been a kind of panic about us. Telegrams have been sent up and down from Egypt to the Sudan to try to get news.

"It is freezingly cold. I made Kima a little chamois coat to keep the chilly winds from his old chest.

"*January* 14.—The steamer is not coming, and the Governor at Assuan wired to say that to send a special steamer down would cost an awful lot, so we are making arrangements to get a felucca. It will be here in the morning, and C.T. will try to get the cars on, one at a time.

"We are getting our clothes washed, and are very glad of the chance. They needed it. We are staying in a crude house, which was very dirty when we arrived, but we had it cleaned, and it is good enough.

"We have had the greatest fun out of some Egyptians here. They, kind souls, feel that they ought to 'do things' for us. The first thing that they did was to haul poor C.T. off in a motor-launch to see the 'circular amusements' —which consisted of whirling madly about in the river, getting splashed by icy spray, and cut in twain by the bitter winds. They wanted to take him to an old Egyptian temple about six miles up river to see 'the amusements written on the walls.' They also said: 'But what can you do in this "mountaineous" city but take recreation on the river?'—the city consisting of about a dozen mud huts.

"*January* 15.—The men busy all day getting a platform made on the felucca for the cars to rest on.

"*January* 16.—We got the cars over to-day. It was a pretty—though to my eyes a perilous—sight to see them crossing. The felucca with a car balancing on it was tugged across by a motor-launch. We cross in the morning.

"*January* 17.—On the road to Shellal. We are camped about thirty miles from there. Got stuck in a bad bit of sand about four o'clock, and have only just got out. We had a tremendous reception when we got on to the other side of the river; the old Arabs and Gippies got quite excited, and insisted on our consuming large quantities of coffee and Marie biscuits.

"*January* 18.—Reached the river on the opposite side of Shellal, crossed the big dam wall, drove through Shellal, and on into Assuan. Yesterday some officials had come out to meet us, but we did not reach there as early as they expected. The heavy sand and broken-up banks round the villages on the west bank had delayed us.

WE MEET THE RESCUE PARTY

"The Government was all worked up about us. There was another search-party out, eight camels and men, and the Egyptian Governor here had made preparations to send out aeroplanes to try to locate us. To-day we saw some figures violently waving to us across the sand, and found that they were police sent out to meet us, and lead us over the dam.

"We felt secure now that we had reached Assuan. The panorama from the hill above Shellal was splendid, with the two towns nestling beneath, on the other side of the river; and the wonderful dam is, of course, world-famous. It is over a mile long, and there are one hundred and eighty sluice gates, through which the water froths and foams down to the rocky shallows below.

"We met the Governor, an Egyptian prince, who was very charming, and said to C.T.: 'You are brave, but your wife—she is a heroine!'—*fun!* They seem so amazed that I have come through it all, and have borne the same hardships as the men.

"Assuan is the most fascinating place, with its curios, and antique-shops with gaily coloured rugs and silks hanging outside. We revelled in the brightness, the colour, and the movement, and wished we had time to stay there.

"*January* 19.—Travelled to this spot outside Esna, which is a big native town. We are so near the end of our journey now that we almost feel regret. It has been our life for so long that we can imagine no other.

"*January* 20. *Luxor, at* 3.30.—We drove through the town of Esna this morning, and the poor quarter was the dirtiest and queerest place I've ever seen. There were dark wooden doorways with filthy women peering

through slits, thousands of filthy children, with filthier flies on their faces; there were babies, pigeons, dogs, and gesticulating men everywhere. The streets are so narrow that the cars could barely scrape through. With all its squalor and dirt, it was an interesting place; its atmosphere was secretive, and hinted of unknown things.

"We got a film of the cars going through one of the narrow streets. Then we crossed the Nile again, and got on to the Luxor road. Like most of the Egyptian roads, it is banked up above the level of the irrigated fields. A gale sprang up, and blew bushels of sand down our aching throats. The road, on which we met hundreds of people and camels, was very narrow. When we got to the slums of the city it was intensely absorbing to watch the thousands of strange and weird people passing to and fro along the road; occasional young girls in bright silks, with gold ornaments in their noses, and bracelets on their arms; men leading camels, or little donkeys loaded with huge bundles of hay; dozens of little boys, all shouting with delight, pointing at the car, and yelling: '*Nisnas, nisnas!*'[1]; old hags in long trailing black garments collecting all the dust and filth of the road, hiding their hideous and often pock-marked faces behind their veils. These women are dirty, and the trailing black garments make them look like evil spirits.

"Then Luxor—what an adorable place it is! We are staying at the Luxor Hotel, and there is a big green garden round it. Again we were welcomed by Egyptian officials, and they have given us permission to take cinematograph pictures of the temples, which is not usually allowed. I was congratulated and patted on the back by

[1] Monkey.

everybody, down to the lift-boy, and called ' Lady Treatt ' by all the Gippies, until I felt quite hurt at being referred to merely as ' Mrs Court Treatt '!

" *January* 21.—We saw the Temple of Karnak this morning. We can't go to the Valley of Kings. It is an awful blow, but we haven't got time. The streets are full of Americans driving about in gharries, and riding sprightly camels and donkeys. There are many pretty and jolly-looking girls among them.

" *January* 22.—We had a magnificent send-off from Luxor; crowds of natives, tourists, and, I think, nearly the whole hotel staff came to bid us good-bye. Since Shellal we have been met on the outskirts of nearly every town by Egyptian officers mounted on ponies, waiting to guide us in through the maze of narrow mud-walled streets.

" The greatest courtesy and consideration have been accorded us in Egypt, for which we feel very grateful.

" We are camped in the desert again to-night, where all is peace. I love it so. Perhaps as much as all the lovely forest country and glorious grass-lands of Africa. So much has been said about the lure of the desert. It has an indefinable charm, the memory of which must remain always.

" We travelled through fields of *durra*[1] and saw Egyptians watering their crops by means of the *sakiye*.[2] It is strange to see a wide green ribbon of fields extending for hundreds of miles along the banks of the Nile, while farther out lies the desolation of sand. Our camp is made in the middle of the road, because of the crops on either side, and men and camels pass our beds and

[1] Maize.

[2] Similar to the *shaduf* or water-wheel.

curse us for obstructing their path. C.T. is ill—fever. Errol and Julius are putting a complete back axle into No. 2. It will be an all-night job.

"I do not know what we should have done without Errol. C.T. and I feel that without him we should hardly have been able to get through as we have done. I see him as he has been throughout the whole journey—a broad, sunburnt young man with tools in his hands, and his eyes smiling serenely behind his round-framed glasses; I see him digging like a navvy at the wheels buried in mud; coming into camp followed by natives carrying a buck he has shot for our dinner; directing the boys with their oxen; chopping down trees to make small platforms on to which the bogged cars could be dragged; ever-ready, and always so busy that it would come as a shock to find him idle. There are many things in an expedition, undramatic, unsung things, which yet are the backbone of it, and the foremost of these are character and continuous labour.

"*January* 23.—A feeling of awful sadness is upon us to-night, for this is the end, and all the memories of our wonderful journey come crowding into our hearts. I feel that there was so much more I could have done and felt during the last sixteen months. I feel that I must stop now, before it is too late—that I must go back. It is hard to face the insincerities and difficulties of 'civilized' life. We have touched and felt the real things. We have suffered together. We have been unhappy, and happy—so happy that we hardly realized that it was happiness. We feel a kind of panic at the thought of going back to everyday life. It will be so hard to talk to people of things which for so long have had no part in our lives. We are happy at the thought of meeting our loved ones—

we long to see them—but just now this other feeling of saying farewell to our beloved Africa, and leaving behind the hopes and fears and joys of the journey, drowns all else. To-morrow morning will see the end, and the beginning of another life.

CHAPTER XVIII

CAIRO

ASTIR, a buzz of activity, heralding in the day—the last of our glorious journey. Julius and Musa woke us with our last mugful of early morning tea, Kima squealed for bananas, and we others raked out the best of our worn kit to wear on this day of days. Julius shamed us all in the immaculate khaki-drill suit, which he had bought for the occasion.

Cairo awaited us. We must be in time; after our long freedom, we must keep an appointment! We had been notified that there was to be a great reception for us at the Pyramids. Our beloved old kit was packed for the last time, and we swung out on the dusty road, the cars responding like the thoroughbreds they were. Kima, perched up on the side in a brand-new silk waistcoat, made faces at startled donkeys and camels as we whizzed past.

On we sped, with G. sitting on the bonnet of the car, photographing what we saw on the road. The first pilot car approached, and decanted an enterprising reporter, eager for a 'story.' On again, speeding toward those peaks on the skyline, the Pyramids. On, on, with feelings of jubilation and regret; then the final moments, when the end burst upon us like an engulfing wave—the waiting crowd; faces, waving hands, cheers, and flowers: bouquets of roses and fragrant violets. We were out of the cars, people pressing forward, crying out words of welcome. They gripped our hands, but I could not see their faces,

for I was weeping. I was dazed; I felt so tiny, and groped about in the crowd for C.T. and the others.

We were forced to face the battery of cameras, and the pressing questions of eager reporters. We were in the cars again, amidst a long procession of vehicles on the Kasr el Nil road into Cairo. The traffic was stopped along our road, and people were lined up in thousands to wave and welcome us in. There were cars drawn up on either side, with people waving and cheering; then the hotel, where hundreds were massed, and officials awaited us on the steps of the terrace. I could not realize that this great honour was for us. It seemed that we were outside it all. It could not be true that we had reached the goal—that all these people were clamouring to see our travel-worn little band.

Through the clamour and buzz, I thought of C.T., who throughout the work and trials of the journey had been so unfailingly fair and understanding toward everybody. His patience must have been tried to the utmost at times, but he was steady and resourceful in the face of tremendous difficulties. I thought of the others, our dear loyal comrades, who had been through everything with us, and of Julius, who had served us so well.

It was over.

Yet Africa still lay out there over the sand—calling, calling in all her power and gentleness, with her fierce sunlight and her soft moonrises. Africa—where the children call to their cattle at sunset, and *marimbas* tinkle in the forest, where wood-smoke rises from the fires at dawn, and mingles with the keen, clean air of morning.

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